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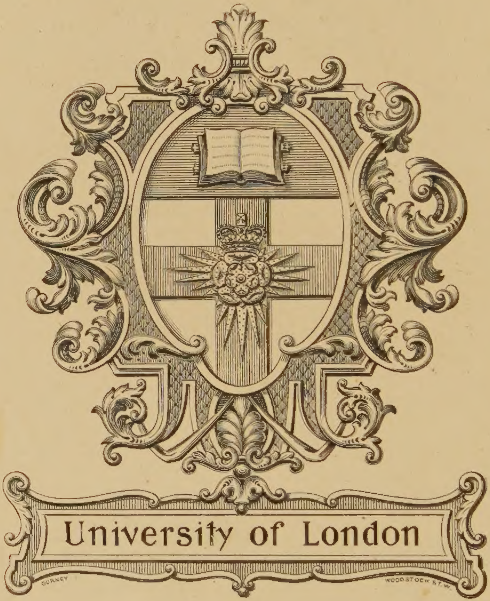

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Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of a New Clause,"—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put:—Bill read the third time:—*Moved*, "That the Bill do pass:"—Verbal Amendments made:—Question put, and *agreed to:* —Bill *passed.*

Criminal Evidence Bill [Bill 132]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 68

After short debate, Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners deprived of the protection of a jury,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After further debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 160, Noes 111; Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

Criminal Evidence Bill—continued.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:" — The House *divided;* Ayes 173, Noes 119; Majority 54.

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Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Moved, "That this House will, upon 12th April, resolve itself into the said Committee,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 141

Amendment proposed, to leave out "12th April," and insert "3rd May," —(*Mr. Dillon,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '12th April' stand part of the Question:"— After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 198, Noes 130; Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 53.)

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Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 147

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Westminster Abbey Bill [Bill 165]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 148

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CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, in lieu of the duties of Customs now charged on rum and on British and Irish spirits imported into the Isle of Man, there shall be charged the duties following (that is to say):—

	s.	*d.*
Rum, including shrub, of the British Possessions, the gallon	8	6
British and Irish spirits, not otherwise exempted from the payment of duty, the gallon	8	6

—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Objection taken; and, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

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Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly; Committee *negatived*: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with*:—Bill read 3ª, and *passed*.

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—o—

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PERPETUAL PENSIONS—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh,*)—instead thereof 193

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*) 218

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Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 267
Post Office—The Postal Union—The South African Colonies—Question, Sir John Swinburne; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 268

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—Financial Statement—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):—
Tea .. .. .. the pound .. Sixpence." 268

WAYS AND MEANS—Committee—*continued*

After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(2.) *Resolved,* That in addition to the Duties of Customs now payable on Wine, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	s.	*d.*
If in imperial pint bottles or bottles of less capacity	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles a proportionate increase of Duty according to capacity.		

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again upon *Thursday* 5th April.

Westminster Abbey Bill [Bill 165]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 365

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported,* without Amendment:—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 173]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 372

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th April.

MOTION

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill—MOTION FOR LEAVE—

Moved, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 373

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

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Metropolitan Board of Works Commission Bill [Bill 191]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews*) 378

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 154]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir George Trevelyan*) 379

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 10th April.

MOTIONS.

Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 192] 379

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Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 193] 379

Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 194] 379

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Customs, Isle of Man Bill—Resolution [March 23] *reported*, and *agreed to* :—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 195] 380

[12.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 27.

Their Lordships met ;—and having gone through the Business on the Paper without debate, [House adjourned] [2.15.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 27.

QUESTIONS.

Dublin Metropolitan Police—The Cleansing Committee—Questions, Mr. P. M'Donald ; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 381

Post Office (Scotland)—Shetland Mail Service—Question, Mr. Lyell ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 382

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 — "Cheering for Mr. Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt in Court, at Athenry—Questions, Mr. Rowntree, Mr. T. W. Russell ; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 383

Egypt (Finance)—Stamp Duties on Foreigners—Question, Mr W. F. Lawrence ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 384

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THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—DEFINITION OF A "PLEASURE HORSE"—Question, Mr. Esslemont; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 404

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE EDUCATION CODE, 1888—Question, Mr. Sinclair; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 404

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Metropolitan Board of Works Commission Bill [BILL 191]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 405

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported,* without Amendment.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews,*)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) **Bill**—MOTION FOR LEAVE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [26th March]:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 407

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 199.]

MOTIONS.

PRIVATE BILLS—
Ordered, That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday 5th April,—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

COMMONS—
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Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Lawson, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. Howell*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 197] 431

Victoria University Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Francis Powell*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 198] 432

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Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday 5th April,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 432
After debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith* :)—Question put :—The House *divided ;* Ayes 145, Noes 51 ; Majority 94.—(Div. List, No. 54.)
Question, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday 5th April," put, and *agreed to.* [6.40.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER (MR. GILHOOLY)—Letter received by Mr. Speaker 457

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MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY RELATING TO THE CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1888-89 461

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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,260, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces" 483

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £28,760, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 37, Noes 77: Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 55.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(2.) £1,500, to complete the sum for Marlborough House.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 494

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £77,013, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens" 495

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £76,513, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 53, Noes 95; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 56.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £40,940, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament" 518

After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £35,940, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Cremer*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 529

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(5.) £2,200, Gordon Monument.

(6.) £110,629, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

(7.) £12,930, to complete the sum for Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 541

(8.) £203,514, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 553

(9.) £23,875, to complete the sum for County Court Buildings.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £12,756, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings" 574

After debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,756, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 48, Noes 87; Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 57.)

Original Question again proposed 584

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dodds*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(11.) £9,250, to complete the sum to defray half cost for Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 585

(12.) £183,000, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 586

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the erection and maintenance (including rents, &c.) of Buildings for the Department of Science and Art" 592

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SUPPLY—Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—*continued.*

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn :*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow ;* Committee report Progress ; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Copyright (Musical Compositions) Bill [Bill 156]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 592

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported ;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.* [12.20.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 6.

MOTION.

Moveable Abodes Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Hozier*) ; *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 200] 594

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT—SEWERAGE WORKS—INCIDENCE OF COST—Question, Mr. Mowbray ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 594

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON HORSES—Questions, Mr. Hozier, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Channing ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 595

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON CARTS AND WHEELS—Questions, Mr. Gent-Davis, Mr. Pickersgill ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 596

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCES FOR AGRICULTURAL CARTS AND WAGGONS—Questions, Mr. Round, Mr. Childers, Mr. Picton ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 598

SCOTLAND—LOCAL TAXATION—ALLOCATION OF £240,000—Questions, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. R. Preston Bruce ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 598

CRIMINAL LAW—7 & 8 GEO. IV. CAP. 28—REPEAL OF THE "WHIPPING PROVISIONS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 600

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)—AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE — Question, Mr. Bartley ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 600

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read ; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair :"—

GOVERNMENT YARDS AND FACTORIES—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government yards and factories, so far as may be done without injury to the Public Service,"—(*Mr. Baumann,*)—instead thereof 601

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question :"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £7,900, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 611

(2.) £8,940, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 632

(3.) £4,000, to complete the sum for Edinburgh University Buildings.

(4.) £17,626, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

(5.) £14,145, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 635

(6.) £9,530, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

(7.) £29,180, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

(8.) £148,848, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.

(9.) £7,500, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £163,302, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of several Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations, and for Repayments to Baronies under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883'" .. 636

After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £162,902, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 46, Noes 93; Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

Original Question again proposed 641

After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £160,302, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Nolan*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 38, Noes 99; Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(11.) £35,500, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 643

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £37,731, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords" .. 644

After short debate, *Moved*, "That Item B, £5,000,—Department of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords—be reduced by the sum of £1,000,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*:)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 648

After short debate, *Moved*, "That Item E, £6,075—Department of Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Salaries—be reduced by the sum of £1,500,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 33, Noes 78; Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 60.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(13.) £43,387, to complete the sum for House of Commons Offices.—After short debate, Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present, Vote *agreed to* 656

(14.) £50,222, to complete the sum for the Treasury.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 659

(15.) £80,734, to complete the sum for the Home Office.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 661

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £61,073, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and

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SUPPLY—Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—*continued.*

Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs" .. .. : 693

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," — (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor* :)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [5th April] *reported* 694

First and Second Resolutions *agreed to.*

Third Resolution read a first and second time:—*Moved*, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolutions *agreed to.*

Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 196]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Dr. Farquharson*) 697

After short debate, [House counted out] [11.25.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 9.

QUESTIONS.

CRIMINAL LAW (SCOTLAND)—DISCHARGE OF PRISONERS FROM BARLINNIE PRISON, GLASGOW—Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 698

CRIMINAL LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—JOHN COOPER, A PRISONER AT YARMOUTH—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) .. 699

INDIA—THE NIZAM—SIR WILLIAM RUMBOLD, BRITISH MINISTER AT THE HAGUE—Question, Mr. M'Lagan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 699

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—PAYMENT OF RESULT FEES—Question, Mr. P. M'Donald; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 700

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—SHERIFF SUBSTITUTE AT STORNOWAY—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 700

INLAND REVENUE—WINE AND SPIRIT LICENCES—MEXICAN PULQUE—KOUMISS—Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 701

SHOP HOURS REGULATION ACT, 1886—CONVICTIONS (METROPOLIS)—Questions, Mr. Maple, Sir John Lubbock; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) .. 702

IRISH CHURCH ACT, 1869—LAND ACT, 1887—SEC. 25—PURCHASERS—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 702

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—BELL LANE, SPITALFIELDS—Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 703

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA—THE INQUIRY—Question, Mr. Hozier; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) 704

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—SECTIONS 18 AND 20—Questions, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 704

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EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—AUDIT OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE SCHOOL AND OTHERS — Question, Mr. James; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 705

RAILWAYS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY—THE TODMORDEN JUNCTION—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) .. 706

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAXES—Questions, Mr. H. S. Wright, Mr. Causton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 707

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 708

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—DEPUTY OFFICIAL RECEIVER FOR THE GUILDFORD DISTRICT—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 708

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—AD VALOREM STAMP TAX—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 709

ADMIRALTY—TORPEDO NET DEFENCE COMMITTEE—STEEL BOOMS—Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 709

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICE — A CONSUL AT NISCH (TURKEY)—Question, Mr. Legh; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 710

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—VISITING JUSTICES OF ST. ALBAN'S GAOL—Questions, Viscount Grimston; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 710

INDIA—CASE OF MR. WILLIAM TAYLER, FORMERLY COMMISSIONER OF PATNA—Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 711

NATIONAL DEBT CONVERSION—TRUSTEES—Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 712

FOREIGN OFFICE—SIR HENRY DRUMMOND WOLFF'S MISSION TO TEHERAN—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 713

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—KING JA JA, OF OPOBO—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 713

JAMAICA—MR. GIBBONS, LATE DISTRICT JUDGE—Question, Mr. Wallace; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) 713

MEDICAL ACT, 1886—SEC. 17—QUALIFIED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS—Question, Mr. A. Morley; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 714

EGYPT—THE NEW LOAN—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 714

POLICE COURTS (METROPOLIS)—MR. WONTNER, SOLICITOR—Questions, Mr. Atherley - Jones; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 714

WAR OFFICE—RE-TEST OF SMALL ARMS—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 715

ADMIRALTY — DOCKYARD EXPENDITURE AND ACCOUNTS — Question, Sir William Plowden; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 716

METROPOLITAN POLICE—SERVICE AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 716

SCOTLAND—DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS—Question, Mr. A Sutherland; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 717

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—UXBRIDGE DISTRICT CASES—WINDSOR COUNTY COURT—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 718

WALES—DISCOVERY OF GOLD—RIGHTS OF THE CROWN—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 718

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT 1882 (BELL RESIDUE BEQUEST)—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 719

COAL MINES—ACCIDENT AT WIGAN—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 719

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES IN KILRUSH—TRIAL OF PRISONERS—MR. IRWIN, R.M.—Questions, Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 720

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 722

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX—Questions, Mr. Firth, Mr. Childers; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 722

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES IN KILRUSH—TRIAL OF PRISONERS—MR. IRWIN, R.M.—Questions, Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor [No reply] 723

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Mr. Wallace; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 724

INDIA—THE INDIAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION—THE REPORT—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 725

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [Salary, &c.]—REPORT—

Resolutions *reported* 725

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*:)—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 104, Noes 169; Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 61.)

Original Question again proposed 729

After short debate, Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 184, Noes 109; Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 62.)

Second Resolution *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson*); *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 201.]

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

Tea.

Moved, (1.) "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):
Tea .. .. the pound .. .. Sixpence." 720

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Other Resolutions *agreed to*.

(8.) *Resolved*, That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

Bail (Scotland) Bill [Bill 172]—
Order for Committee read 841
Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

Supply—Report—Resolutions [6th April] *reported* 841
Resolutions 1 to 3 *agreed to*.
Resolution 4:—After short debate, Resolution *postponed*.
Resolution 5:—After short debate, Resolution *agreed to*.
Resolutions 6 to 13 *agreed to*.
Resolution 14 *postponed*.
Resolution 15 *agreed to*.
Postponed Resolutions to be considered upon *Thursday*.

MOTION.

Adjournment—
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Jackson*) .. 845
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Standing Committees (Chairman's Panel)—
Ordered, That the Committee of the Chairman's Panel have leave to make a Report 845
Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table. [12.25.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 10.

QUESTIONS.

Death of His Imperial Majesty the German Emperor—Communication from the German Ambassador 846
Egypt—The Daira Sanieh of the Khedive—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 846
Samoa—King Malietoa—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 847

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FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—APPLECROSS BAY—Question, Dr. R. Macdonald; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 847

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—THE LEWIS TELEGRAPH CABLE—Question, Dr. R. Macdonald; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 848

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEMES UNDER THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—Question, Sir Walter Foster; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 848

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 1—Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 849

LAND JUDGES' COURT (IRELAND)—ARREARS—JUDGMENT OF MR. JUSTICE MONROE—Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 850

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 1—Questions, Mr. Carew; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 851

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONTRACTS FOR BAYONETS—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 852

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—THE BUDGET ESTIMATES—Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 852

INLAND REVENUE—PROBATE DUTY IN ENGLAND AND WALES — Questions, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 853

CIVIL SERVICE—STAFF OF THE CHIEF OFFICIAL RECEIVER IN BANKRUPTCY—CERTIFICATES—Question, Mr. Price; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 853

LICENSING DUTIES—SIX-DAY LICENCES—THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 854

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX—Questions, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Gurdon; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 854

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX—Questions, Mr. Caleb Wright, Mr. H. Gardner; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 855

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX—Question, Mr. Darling; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 855

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT, 1882—SECTION 12—Question, Colonel Eyre; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 856

RIVER THAMES—UNLOADING RUBBISH IN THE ESTUARY—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 856

ADMIRALTY — THE DIRECTOR OF NAVAL CONSTRUCTION — Question, Sir William Plowden; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 857

ADMIRALTY — THE DIRECTOR OF NAVAL CONSTRUCTION — Question, Sir William Plowden; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 857

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—DISALLOWANCE OF SPECIAL RULES IN SCOTLAND—Question, Mr. Preston Bruce; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 858

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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES IN KILRUSH—TRIAL OF PRISONERS—MR. IRWIN, R.M.—Questions, Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Edward Harrington, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Gill; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 858

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ROUNDSTONE (GALWAY)—Question, Mr. Foley; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 862

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—CHARITABLE FUNDS—THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. F. S. Powell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 863

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—CONVICTION OF G. A. ARNOLD, AT WOLVERHAMPTON—Question, Mr. Fenwick; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 863

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION OF JOHN DOUGLASS AND JOSEPH WOLFENDALE FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER—Questions, Mr. Fenwick; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 864

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FAILURE OF MESSRS. GREENWAY, SMITH, AND GREENWAY, BANKERS, WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 865

LOTTERIES ACTS—DRAWING OF TICKETS ON "PRIMROSE DAY"—Questions, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 865

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—NEW CODE—ARTICLE 21—GRANTS FOR COOKERY—Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Sinclair; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 866

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND) — RIOT AT CLASHMORE — CASE OF HUGH MATHESON, COTTAR—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 867

WAYS AND MEANS — THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — THE YEOMANRY CAVALRY — Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 868

METROPOLITAN POLICE—SERVICE AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 868

METROPOLIS—HACKNEY CARRIAGES—LICENCES AND TAX UPON CABS AND OMNIBUSES—Question, Mr. Cremer; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 868

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — Question, Mr. Whitmore; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 869

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—JUDICIAL DISCRETION OF MAGISTRATES—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Question, Mr. Edward Harrington [No reply] 869

IRISH LANDOWNERS—"PRINTED STATEMENT" OF GRIEVANCES—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 871

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) — LEGISLATION — Question, Sir Edward Watkin; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 871

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (1882)—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE)—
THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION OF JOHN DOUGLASS AND JOSEPH WOLFENDALE FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER—
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Fenwick*) .. 872
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. CONYBEARE—Personal Explanation, Mr. Conybeare; Observations, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 879

MOTIONS.

FISHERY DEPARTMENT (BOARD OF TRADE)—RESOLUTION—
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade as now constituted is not in accordance with the scheme by which the control of the fisheries was transferred to the Board of Trade, and in order to carry out that scheme and to secure the proper management and development of the fisheries of England and Wales, they should be placed under an authority comprising, in addition to the officials of the Board of Trade, persons with practical knowledge of the Sea and Inland Fisheries,"—(*Sir Edward Birkbeck*) 830
After debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

SUNDAY CLOSING ACTS (IRELAND)—SELECT COMMITTEE—
Moved, "That the Select Committee on Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland) do consist of Seventeen Members,"—(*Mr. Peter M'Donald*) .. 911
After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 9, Noes 173; Majority 164.—(Div. List, No. 63.)

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882 (BELL RESIDUE BEQUEST)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the Scheme for the Management of the Endowment known as the Bell Residue Fund, now lying upon the Table of the House,"—(*Mr. Caldwell*) 915
After short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Vagrant Act Amendment Bill [Bill 125]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. C. T. Dyke Acland*) 931
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. James Stuart*.)
Question proposed, "That the word "now" stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill *withdrawn*.

Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill [Bill 138]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. De Cobain*) .. 949
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now" and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir James Corry*.)

Municipal Franchise (*Belfast*) *Bill*—continued.

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 80, Noes 162; Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 64.)

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

Wages (Ireland) Bill [Bill 139]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. De Cobain*) .. 952

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir James Corry.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Buchanan:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 174, Noes 68; Majority 106.—(Div. List, No. 65.)

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 96, Noes 143; Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 66.)

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *put off* for six months.

WAYS AND MEANS
Customs and Inland Revenue Bill

Resolutions [April 9] *reported* 961

After short debate, Resolutions *agreed to.*

Ordered, That a Bill be brought in upon the Seventh Resolution, and that Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson do prepare and bring it in.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 27th day of March, and then agreed to by the House, That they do make provision therein pursuant to the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Resolutions.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 202.]

[12.20.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief Bill [Bill 5]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Blane*) .. 963

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 190, Noes 247; Majority 57.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1027

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *put off* for six months.

Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]—

Order for Second Reading read 1031

Second Reading *deferred* till *Monday* next.

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QUESTION.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—Question, Mr. Illingworth; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith:) —Short Debate thereon 1031

MOTIONS.

Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment (No. 2) Bill – *Ordered* (*Dr. Cameron, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Trevor Lawrence, Sir Walter Foster*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 203] 1033

ARMY ESTIMATES—

Ordered, That the Reports and Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Army and Navy Estimates of last Session be referred to the Select Committee on Army Estimates,—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

[5.55.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 12.

QUESTIONS.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (CONVICTION OF MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN AFFIRMED)—Letter received by Mr. Speaker 1034

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1884—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1035

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICES — MONACO — Question, Colonel Hambro; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1035

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS FOR THE BALTINGLASS UNION—Questions, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1035

LOTTERY ACTS—CONFECTIONERS' PACKETS OF SWEETS—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1036

ARMY (INDIA)—ARMS OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY—Question, Sir Henry Havelock-Allan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1037

EGYPTIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1038

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS—TENDERS FOR IRONMONGERY AND CUTLERY—Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1038

LAW AND JUSTICE (METROPOLIS)—MIDDLESEX SESSIONS—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1039

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—SENTENCE ON DR. MAGNER—Question, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1040

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAX—Question, Mr. F. Hardcastle; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1040

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION FOR FISHERMEN—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1041

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE NEW LONDON COUNTY AUTHORITY—Question, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1041

REGISTER HOUSE, EDINBURGH—RIGHT OF INSPECTION—Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1042

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—CASE OF PETER GOWIE, OF PERTH—Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1043

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NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (1882)—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE)—

THE DISTURBANCE AT ENNIS—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Parnell*) .. 1068

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 179, Noes 249; Majority 70.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1106

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Ritchie*) .. 1109

After long debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Postponed Resolutions [9th April] *reported* .. 1170

Resolutions 4 and 14 *further considered*:—After short debate, Resolutions *agreed to*.

MOTIONS.

Marriages of Nonconformists (Attendance of Registrars) (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Richard, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Waddy*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 205] 1174

Partnership Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Seale-Hayne*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 206] 1174

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Amendment) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Sinclair*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 207] .. 1174

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Women's Suffrage Bill (No. 52)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Denman*) .. 1175

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months,")—(*The Lord President.*)

On Question, That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion? *Resolved* in the *negative*:—Bill to be read 2ª *this day six months*.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Coleraine, &c.) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*, for *The Lord Privy Seal*); read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 63) 1178

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MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY (SUPPLY)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Fridays, be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the Second Reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1199

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 243, Noes 143; Majority 100.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1210

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Courtney:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) Bill [Bill 129]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis*) .. 1286

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned till *Friday* next:—Debate to be resumed upon *Friday* next.

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 154]

Bill *considered* in Committee 1288

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday* next.

MOTIONS.

Weekly Wages Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham* (*Glamorgan*), *Mr. Burt, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Randell, Mr. De Cobain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 208] 1290

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. A. Gathorne-Hardy, Mr. M'Lagan*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 209] 1290

Livery Franchise (London) Abolition Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Firth, Mr. Causton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 210] 1290

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—SPECIAL REPORT—

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report 1290

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table. [12.10.]

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Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis,—*Presented* (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*); read 1^a (No. 64) 1291

Western Australia—Suspension by the Governor of the Chief Justice—Questions, Lord Herschell; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford) 1291

Law and Justice—Criminal Trials—Proof of Previous Convictions—Question, Observations, Lord Coleridge; Reply, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) 1292

Copyhold Acts Amendment Bill (No. 6)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Hobhouse*) .. 1293

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Viscount Cross*) .. 1295

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow*.

Saving of Life at Sea (Use of Oil for Calming Rough Seas)—Motion for Returns—

Moved for,

1. "Copy of any report or memorandum of the Board of Trade calling attention to a memorandum issued by the Board of Admiralty on the use of oil at sea for modifying the effects of breaking waves.
2. Copy of Circular Letter of the Admiralty, of 1st December, 1884, No. 3,206-8,305.
3. Copy of a Report of Captain Chetwynd, R.N., to the Committee of the Royal and National Lifeboat Institution, 30th September, 1884, referred to in those reports,"—(*The Lord Cottesloe*) 1296

Motion *agreed to*:—Returns ordered to be laid before the House. [5.0.]

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Trustee Savings Banks Act, 1887—The Regulations—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. 1297

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—
Second Reading [Adjourned Debate] [Third Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1331

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Caine:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill [Bill 118]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate*) 1442

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1443

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (Clark's Bequest, &c.)—Motion for an Address—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the scheme for the Management of the Endowments in the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity and county of Inverness, known as Clark's Bequest, and the Nairnside School, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act) now lying upon the Table of the House,"—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh*) .. 1445

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 35, Noes 93; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 173]—

Ordered, That the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] upon Monday, 23rd April, at half-past Eleven of the clock,—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan.*)

[12.45.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

NEW PEER—
William Henry Lord De Ramsey—Was (in the usual manner) introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat.

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2) Bill (No. 38)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Crawford*) .. 1453
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly. [5.45.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.) Bill (by Order)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Tatton Egerton*) 1463
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 18, Noes 144; Majority 126.—(Div. List, No. 71.)
Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*:—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

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Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill—Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1495

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State-Aided Colonization—Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1498

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1498

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—Second Reading [Adjourned Debate] [Fourth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1499

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Firth*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday*.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) Bill [Bill 92]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 37, Noes 44; Majority 7.—(Div. List, No. 72.)

Architects' Registration Bill [Bill 81]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Colonel Duncan*) 1552
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill *withdrawn*.

Steam Engines and Boilers Bill [Bill 137]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1561

After debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Addison.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After further debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 96, Noes 147; Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 73.)

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2) Bill [Bill 162]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh*) 1590

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 90, Noes 126; Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 74.)

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *put off* for six months.

MOTIONS.

Queen Anne's Bounty Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Kerans*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 211] 1603

Private Bill Legislation—

Ordered, That so much of the Lords Message as proposes the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Private Bill Legislation be now *considered:*—

Lords Message considered *accordingly.*

Ordered, That the Select Committee appointed to join with the Committee of the Lords to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified, with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of Costs and Charges, do meet in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath directed the said Committee to meet in Room 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to agree in the appointment of a Chairman:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records:—That three be the quorum.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Partnership Bill [Bill 206]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1603

It being One of the clock A.M., the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow;* and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

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Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill [Bill 2]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Heneage*) .. 1605

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Salt.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 239, Noes 182; Majority 57.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1665

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday* 27th April.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0

—(*Mr. Jackson*) 1668

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Craig*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:— Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]—

Order for Second Reading read 1673

Second Reading *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 212] 1674

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 213] 1674

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Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 215] 1674

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Guardians of the Poor (Qualification) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. Stuart, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. James Rowlands*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 220] 1675

[5.58.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 19.

Liability of Trustees Bill (No. 24)—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1676

House of Lords—Motion for an Address—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission to inquire and report upon the question whether a revision of the Standing Orders in the House of Lords, or other changes with regard to it, might be so framed as to add to its efficiency,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 1676

After short debate, on Question? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

Private Bill Legislation—

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have directed the Select Committee appointed by them to join with a Committee of this House to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation to meet the Committee appointed by their Lordships in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, To-morrow at half-past Three of the clock:

Ordered, That the Committee appointed by this House do meet the Committee appointed by the Commons in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, *To-morrow* at half-past Three of the clock.

[5.15.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 19.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Keble College Bill [*Lords*] (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. J. G. Talbot*) 1687

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge should be extended to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,"—(*Mr. Courtney Kenny,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 125, Noes 127; Majority 2.—(Div. List, No. 76.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added" 1701

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment in line 3, after the word "extended," to insert the words "by a Private Bill,"—(*Mr. Courtney Kenny*:)—Question, "That those words be inserted in the proposed Amendment," put, and *agreed to.*

Question,

"That the words 'it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act, enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, should be extended by a Private Bill to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,' be added after the word 'That' in the Main Question,"

put, and *agreed to.*

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Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Vauxhall Park Bill, That they do provide that the purchase of the Park be not made until the opinion of the ratepayers of Lambeth has been taken on the desirability of such purchase,"—(*Mr. Kelly*) 1702
After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—TOWN COUNCILS OF BOROUGHS—Question, Mr. Rathbone; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1733
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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — THE ENNIS INQUIRY—DEPOSITION OF POLICE CONSTABLE WATSON—Questions, Mr. Lalor, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Questions, Mr. Edward Harrington, Mr. Clancy [No reply] 1734
REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS — LEGISLATION — Question, Sir William Houldsworth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) 1736
LOCAL GOVERNMENT—CORPORATIONS OF ENGLAND AND WALES—RETURN—Question, Mr. Rowntree; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1736
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE LICENSING CLAUSES—Questions, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Craig, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1736
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ELECTIVE COUNTY COUNCILLORS — THE COUNTY OF LONDON — ELECTORAL DIVISIONS—Questions, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1737
PRISON REGULATIONS (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF A PRISONER IN GALWAY GAOL—Questions, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1738
FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—MUSSEL BEDS—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 1739
PUBLIC HEALTH—SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES—NOTICE OF CASES—Question, Mr. Brunner; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1740
ARMY ESTIMATES — VOLUNTEER REGIMENTAL CAMPS—Questions, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1740
LAND COURT (IRELAND)—RETURNS—Question, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1741
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 34—CORONERS—TRANSFER OF POWERS—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1741

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1742

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) — EDUCATION SCHEMES—Questions, Mr. Caldwell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1742

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE CONSTITUTION—Questions, Mr. Caldwell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1743

NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION, 1883 — SEIZURE OF THE SMACK "LADY GODIVA" — Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 1744

GERMANY—HEALTH OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1744

NOTICE OF MOTION.

—o—

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Notice, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Mr. Hunter; Answers, Mr. W. H. Smith 1745

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—
SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [FIFTH NIGHT]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1746
After long debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*.

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill [Bill 207]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. W. Russell*) 1823
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) Bill [Bill 32]—
Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Colonel Nolan*) 1824
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee:—Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]—
Order for Second Reading read 1825
Second Reading *deferred* till *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (NEW CODE, 1888)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from so much of the Code (1888) of the Scotch Education Department as imposes on the earning of grants for cookery a new restriction not imposed in the English Code;

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (NEW CODE, 1888)—*continued.*

"And further praying Her Majesty to withhold Her assent from so much of the said Code as, contrary to the usage in England, includes grants for drawing in reckoning the total of 17*s.* 6*d.* per scholar in average attendance, to which the amount which may be earned by school managers is limited,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) 1826

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 221] 1832

ORDER OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say):

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

[12.40.]

LORDS.

NEW PEER.

Tuesday, April 17.

William Henry Lord de Ramsey—introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July, 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

Tuesday, April 10.

For *Limerick Borough*, *v.* Henry Joseph Gill, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

Monday, April 16.

For *Lanark* (*Mid Division*), *v.* Stephen Mason, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Thursday, March 22.

County of Leicester (*Eastern or Melton Division*)—Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby.

Thursday, April 5.

County of Glamorgan (*Western or Gower Division*)—David Randell, esquire.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Third Session of the *Twenty-Fourth Parliament* of the
United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*,
appointed to meet 5 August, 1886, in the Fiftieth
Year of the Reign of

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1888.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt (Conversion) * (49).

Second Reading — Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances) (43).

Third Reading—Law of Distress Amendment (44), and *passed*.

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 44.)

(*The Lord Herschell.*)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Lord Herschell.*)

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, the intention of the Bill was to put the landlord in the same position as other creditors. But the effect of this would be to take away from the tenant the credit on which, at present, he could rely. The result would be that the tenant would either have to pay in advance or would have his rent raised. He did not intend to oppose the Bill; but he wished to call attention to the direction in which legislation was now going.

Lord HERSCHELL said, that he would not have introduced the Bill unless he had received assurances of its usefulness from those who were better able to judge of the matter than himself, and those who had a practical acquaintance with the question had assured him that it was likely to be advantageous, since the present system combined the maximum of hardship to the tenant with the minimum of advantage to the landlord, because when the tools of a skilled workman were sold they generally fetched very little, while the workman was deprived of his means of working.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 3ª accordingly; Amendments made; Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES) BILL.—(No. 43.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, observed that the subject of the better preservation of life at sea was one which had already engaged the attention of Parliament, and a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the whole subject. That Commission had dealt with the subject in a far more comprehensive manner than he now proposed to do in the present Bill. A Bill had also been introduced last year in "another place" which had been referred to a Select Committee. That Bill had dealt exclusively with the provision of boats and life-saving apparatus, and it was upon the Report of that Committee that the provisions of the present Bill were mainly founded. The subject had also aroused the attention of some of our Colonies, and representations had been made by the Governments of Tasmania, Queensland, and Victoria, to the effect that legislation should be initiated by the Imperial Parliament, in consequence of which the question had been discussed at the Colonial Conference. At the present time ships were divided into two classes; the first being "passenger ships"—namely, those only which carried emigrants, and other ships, which meant all ships, whether they carried passengers or cargo, provided they did not carry emigrants. The Passengers Act, 1855, provided that every passenger ship should carry a number of boats in proportion to her tonnage. A ship of under 200 tons was to carry two boats, under 400 three boats, under 600 four boats, under 1,000 five boats, and under 1,500 tons six boats; while a ship of over 1,500 tons, whatever might be her size, was only obliged to carry seven boats, no matter what amount of passengers she carried. It was also necessary to carry four lifebuoys only. Whether a ship carried passengers or not, under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, she was obliged to carry the necessary complement of boats according to the scale if she cleared from any port in the United Kingdom; if she did not, there was no compulsion to carry any life-saving apparatus whatever. Owing to the fact that that Act made demands far in excess of the actual requirements of the case, it had become practically a dead letter. By law a vessel could not be obliged to carry more than seven life-boats. In 1873 power had been given to the Board of Trade to relieve shipowners who did not carry more than 12 passengers by diminishing the number of boats they were obliged to carry. It was not a general complaint that the large well-found steamers were insufficiently supplied with life-saving apparatus. If they took the Cunard steamers—for instance, the *Etruria*—the captain of that ship gave evidence that she carried, on the average, 1,000 persons; that she had 14 large boats capable of carrying 800, with 1,207 life-belts, one in each state room for every passenger, carried overhead in racks. Besides this there were bulkhead doors which were closed every day all through the ship by the chief engineer in his department and by the chief officer in the sailing department. All boats were lowered every Friday in Liverpool before they sailed; the boats were sent away from the ship manned; if there was any wind they sailed; if not, they were pulled; the boats were all ready for sea use, and all the 12 or 14 boats could be lowered into the water in the space of two minutes, and they were also provisioned with water. In the *City of New York*, lately launched, additional life-saving apparatus was provided in the shape of a false bottom, so that if one bottom was stove in the ship would still have the false one to keep the water out. Similar precautions in regard to boats were taken on board the steamers running between Calais and Dover, and Folkestone and Boulogne. But in short voyage ships, taking the average of 50 ships leaving the Port of Liverpool, the legal requirement of boat accommodation was found to be 7·6 per cent of the passengers carried; but the actual percentage was 10·6, and in those boats which crossed the Irish Channel the legal requirement was 13·1 and the actual percentage 16·1. There were life jackets for the crew only. But life-saving apparatus for only 10 or 16 per cent was very inadequate. These requirements were based upon the tonnage of a ship and not on the number of passengers, and the tonnage of ships was very different from what it used to be owing to the deductions now made from the gross tonnage. He knew of a case where the tonnage from 300 gross had by various reductions been reduced to 6 net, and therefore the life-saving apparatus which the ship would be required to carry would be almost *nil*. It was also necessary to see that the apparatus was in a state of efficiency. Great complaints had been made on the part of seamen going to sea in cargo ships, not of the amount of boat accommodation provided, but on account of the state of that accommodation. There had been a case not long ago of a man falling overboard and being afloat for 25 minutes; they had been three-quarters of an hour before they got a boat over the side for the want of proper davits. The evidence was to the effect that the boat was on the after-house, turned upside down. They had to turn the boat over; and, finally, a sea had lifted her off the tackles and she had broken in two. At present the Surveyors of the Board of Trade were not empowered to go on board to inspect the life-saving apparatus; they could only inspect crew spaces, lights, and fog signals, unless they were Inspectors also, which they rarely were. Since 1875 the Board of Trade had only obtained four convictions against owners for want of proper boat accommodation and want of efficient life-saving appliances. It might be said that the most efficient mode of saving life at sea was to keep the vessel afloat by means of bulkheads; but, in dealing with these matters, we must not attempt to overweight the Bill, competition with foreign shipping was so keen. The value of boats for saving life was very great, notwithstanding the present inadequate provision. In the period of nine years between 1876 and 1885, of 135,273 lives which had been exposed to loss by wreck, 60,231 were actually saved by the ships' own boats, that was nearly two-thirds of the 109,745 saved, and nearly half of the whole lives that needed saving. We had lost on or near the coast 6,629 lives in the same period. We had fortunately saved 34,602 lives in the nine years, but by far the greatest proportion—namely, 14,807, had been saved by the ships' own boats. The Bill would provide for a new departure in this legislation. The Government thought that those who were primarily interested had already endeavoured in some measure to do their duty. On the lines crossing the Atlantic and the Channel adequate provision far exceeding what was required by law had been made, and he thought we should be meeting the requirements of all concerned if we invited the owners and others interested to advise as to how this life-saving apparatus might be provided. First of all, there were the shipowners, then there were the shipbuilders, then the practical navigators, then the able seamen, and, lastly, the underwriters at Lloyd's. The Bill proposed that a Committee, composed of three of each of these classes, should be formed *ad hoc* for the purpose of classifying the different kinds of vessels, and then of making rules with regard to the life-saving apparatus to be carried by each. These rules would be subject to the approval of the Board of Trade, and would be laid upon the Table of that and the other House of Parliament, so that Parliament would have an opportunity of judging whether they would be efficient or not. As to inspection, any Surveyor or other person appointed by the Board of Trade might give notice to an owner that a ship should not clear if there was any deficiency. He did not claim that the result of this measure would be absolute immunity as regarded loss of life at sea; but he trusted that it would reduce the risks, and provide some remedy for a state of the law which was at present extremely anomalous and not suited to the requirements of the times. The boat scales in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, and Passengers Act, 1855, were framed upwards of 30 years ago to meet a different state of things than now existed. At that time nearly the whole of the passenger traffic was carried on by wooden sailing ships of about 1,200 to 1,500 tons burden. The boat scales were framed on the basis of the ship's registered tonnage, which, in those days of sailing ships, gave a very good idea of the vessel's size and of her capabilities for stowing boats, &c.; but now the sailing ships had entirely given place to iron or steel steamships of two or three times their size. Every merchant seaman on the North-East Coast was in favour of men being provided with life-belts. He ventured to hope that the rules to be made by this Committee would be welcomed and cheerfully observed by all the interests concerned, and that, if these expectations were fulfilled, it might be possible to extend still further the principle of inviting all the interests affected by other such matters to unite in deciding what restrictions should be laid upon them for their common good. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

LORD COTTESLOE said, he heartily supported the principle of the Bill, which he earnestly hoped might conduce to the saving of life at sea. He would also suggest that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, something should be done to require the use of oil in cases of storm and shipwreck.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, that the object of the Bill was one which every man would approve, and he entirely agreed with the noble Lord who had moved the second reading that the present law was most unsatisfactory. It was more—it was extremely anomalous, and in some of its provisions almost absurd. But he wished to say that there was no class of men in this country who were more anxious to save life than the shipowners, and he was not in the least ashamed to tell their Lordships that the conviction had been forced upon his mind that, of all the traders of this country, the most capable of conducting their business were the shipowners. He regarded, therefore, with some degree of suspicion, or at least of jealousy, all those attempts to teach men a business which they knew much better than the Legislature. By Clause 2 the President of the Board of Trade, for the time being, was authorized to appoint a Consultative Committee to assist him in this particular matter. There were to be three representatives of each class concerned on that council, the selection of whom was to be left absolutely in the hands of the President of the Board of Trade. Now this council ought to consist of the most competent men in the country; but the most competent men had so much to do at home that they would be prevented from coming up to London, and waiting on the President of the Board of Trade to teach him his business. He was much afraid that the persons who would be left to select from would be gentlemen who had nothing else to do, and who would be very glad of a run to London, at the public expense, if they had the opportunity. He thought that question would require considerable threshing out on the next stage of the Bill. He would further point out that what the Bill required to be done was practically done now by all the best shipowners in the country. Interference with a great industry should be confined to a minimum, and only to such matters as were absolutely necessary to protect life. The next point he wished to refer to was Clause 5, which provided for the inspection of ships for the purpose of enforcing the rules made by the Bill. That inspection was to be undertaken by a Surveyor appointed under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, or any such other person as the President of the Board of Trade might appoint. Those words seemed to him very much too wide, and ought to be altered by adding some such words as "properly qualified." He had ventured to make these few remarks preparatory to the next stage of the Bill, because he thought it was only fair to point out defects in the Bill on the second reading, so that the Government might have an opportunity of considering them before the Committee stage was reached.

LORD SUDELEY said, he entirely agreed with the noble Earl who had introduced the Bill that the present state of the law was most anomalous. It was most important not to take the responsibility away from the shipowners, and that where ships were not well found there should be some regulations which would show what was desirable for saving life at sea. He agreed with the noble Earl who spoke last that the Consultative Committee should be composed of thoroughly practical men, but he could not but believe that the President of the Board of Trade would do his best to attain that object. It was shown in a discussion that place in that House some years ago that throwing oil on the water immediately around a ship had a very beneficial effect. He thought that if to every lifebuoy a bag of oil was attached much good might be done. When the buoy was thrown into the water the oil would trickle out, and there could be no doubt that that would smooth the water for some distance round the buoy. He thought that was a point worth consideration by the Board of Trade. He was extremely glad the Government had taken up this matter, and he sincerely hoped the Bill would be passed almost in its present shape.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, that as he had something to do with the earlier stages of the Bill he should like to say a word in support of it. He thought his noble Friend who had introduced the Bill with such a clear and able statement must be satisfied with the reception it had met with at the hands of their Lordships. No doubt, the Bill dealt with two very important questions. In the first place, it revised the boat scale; and, in the next place, it contained a provision by which the Board of Trade would be brought in future more directly in touch with some of the commercial interests. It had been said that the Board of Trade had been indifferent to the interests with which it had to deal; but he did not think that was a just accusation. No one who had not been at the Board of Trade could understand the difficulties which surrounded the Office of President, and the vast number of subjects with which he was called upon to deal. The subjects brought under the President's consideration ranged from lighthouses to bankruptcy, and from sea vessels to salmon fishing. It was, therefore, impossible that any man who undertook that Office could have a full knowledge of everything with which he had to deal. The noble Earl (the Earl of Ravensworth) appeared to think that the most competent men of their respective class would not be secured to act on the Consultative Committee. He could not agree with the noble Earl in this view. During his short experience of the Board of Trade he had found gentlemen, at great sacrifice of their valuable time, and often at much inconvenience to their own business, ready on all occasions to come forward freely and frankly to give the Department the benefit of their advice, and he desired to take this opportunity of acknowledging the debt of gratitude under which he lay to those gentlemen. He could well understand the feeling of shipowners towards the Board of Trade, for they certainly had sometimes had a rough time of it. With regard to the method of constituting this Consultative Committee, he thought the mode proposed in the Bill—namely, that of the selection of three names out of nine names submitted by each of the respective bodies—was the best that could be devised. The Bill followed as closely as possible the recommendations of the Committee which sat last year to inquire into the subject, with Lord Charles Beresford as Chairman. The proposal in the Bill for constituting the Consultative Committee was the most practical form of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee. The noble Earl seemed to make it a point of objection to this Bill that it merely provided for that which all good shipowners already made it a practice to do; but this was an argument in favour of the Bill—namely, that it would merely compel careless shipowners to take the precautions which good shipowners took already. Another excellent point of the Bill was that it aimed at securing its object by prevention rather than by penalty. In proceedings against a shipowner the jury were only too ready to give him the benefit of the doubt, and proceedings after a casualty had occurred were consequently found not to be effective. He hoped that this experiment of appointing a Consultative Committee to assist the Board of Trade would be followed in regard to other matters, but to appoint a general Consultative Council to assist the Board of Trade in regard to all its operations would be quite illusory, for men of great experience on some matters might be asked to express an opinion on others of which they had no especial knowledge. The appointment of Consultative Committees *ad hoc* for the purpose of dealing with the details of particular measures might, however, be very desirable and of great practical utility. Nothing would do more to break down that feeling of antagonism which in certain quarters unfortunately and unjustly existed against the Board of Trade. He was sure his noble Friend in charge of the Bill would give a full and fair consideration to any Amendment which might be brought forward with regard to the details of the Bill, and he believed that the Bill, when passed into law, would prove a most useful measure.

The Earl of HARROWBY said, he welcomed the Bill most cordially, for it promised to be very useful and valuable. The most important provision in it was that contained in the 2nd clause, which, for the first time, established a Consultative Committee to assist the Board of Trade. There was much to be said in favour of such a Committee, but there was the danger attached to this proposal that it might diminish the responsibility of the Minister at the head of the Department. The matter required to be carefully watched. It would probably be a good plan if a Committee *ad hoc* were appointed whose views the Minister could consult, and after consulting whom he might form his own opinion, but the full responsibility of that opinion ought to rest upon him. He desired also to point out that in the case of the rules to be drawn up, and which were to be laid on the Table 40 days before they came into operation, it ought to be provided that the 40 days should only commence to run from the time that they were in print and circulated. He had known cases in which rules were laid on the Table in dummy, and the printed rules were only circulated 30 days after. This made the control of the House almost illusory.

The Earl of ONSLOW said, that the suggestions made by the noble Earl who had just sat down and by other noble Lords who had spoken would be very carefully considered. In answer to the suggestion that the proposed Committee would weaken the authority and responsibility of the President of the Board of Trade, he would point out that then, as at the present time, he would make the rules, and would be responsible to Parliament for them.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOLS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord NORTON, in rising to ask the Lord President, Whether the Government contemplate taking any steps this Session on the Report of the Departmental Commission on Agricultural and Dairy Schools? said, that the proposal in the Report lacked definition and limit. It was, however, large enough in its outline, although it was called only a commencement. The proposal was that there should be a Centra Normal School of Agriculture, to be provided and maintained by the State; that existing endowed schools for the middle class should be utilized for teaching practical farming; that agricultural schools originated by local effort should be stimulated and assisted by Government aid for labourers, tenant farmers, and others; that district schools in selected districts, of various kinds, five in England and two in Scotland, should be at once set up under the control of the Central Department, and in the management of district committees; that gardens, allotments, and farms should be connected with rural elementary schools for the study of the principles of agriculture, scholarships of £50 a-year each being given to boys and girls who should pass the Sixth Standard in them; that district dairy schools should be established, and endowed with £500 a-year each, besides special grants for buildings and apparatus; that an annual grant of £3,000 should be put at the disposal of the Agricultural Department for original agricultural research; that diplomas from the Central School should be given for the highest qualification, which in agricultural studies was to include forestry, gardening, fruit-growing, poultry, and bee-keeping, besides all ordinary farm work; and in dairy studies was to include the rearing and feeding of stock, and making cheese. Such was the outline for commencement, and for the purpose it was not too large. But the question was whether the State could do all this best. South Kensington did not seem to him to be the true fountain of practical agricultural skill. Much was being done at the present time which State undertaking would supersede. The school in Cumberland was acknowledged to be a success, although the result of private enterprize. Then there was Cirencester, which was said to be too expensive for small farmers, but the scholarships and exhibitions of £100 a-year which this Report proposed would fully open it to their use. Evening classes were also being established for this purpose in country districts. Those actually engaged and interested in the advance of technical knowledge were everywhere making better provision for special apprenticeship than the doctrinaires of Government Departments could possibly make by State schools within definite programmes. At most, the State ought to provide central training for teachers, and exhibitions to aid poor talent. There was already on the Estimates a proposal to give £5,000 to begin the work recommended by the Commission, and a promise had been made of a Bill for a Minister of Agriculture. A Department of Agriculture under the Council Office existed in Parliament Street, and in connection with the Local Government Bill more shadowy forms of coming aid appeared. Some clearer indication should be given of what was intended before steps were taken which would make mistake irremediable.

EARL SPENCER asked, when the Government proposed to lay on the Table the Evidence on which the Report of the Departmental Commission was founded? It seemed to him important that they should have the Evidence before they considered the recommendations made in the Report, as there were many points that required to be elucidated by the Evidence.

LORD VERNON said, he was glad of an opportunity to express the gratitude that a considerable section of the agricultural community felt for the patience and consideration Her Majesty's Government had evinced in dealing with all matters relating to the industry in which they were interested. Commissions had been appointed to inquire into every subject that had been suggested as a possible remedy for the existing depression, which, although the agriculturist had exercised his prerogative of grumbling at, was, as the noble Marquess told them on Monday, not unique to this country, or confined to this one branch of industry, most departments of trade having suffered in a like ratio. The subject of State-aided agricultural education had been an almost unknown thing in this country up to the present time. The Commission of which Sir Richard Paget was the Chairman recommended that dairy schools should be assisted by funds to carry on their operations, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer very wisely remarked that he must be convinced of the utility of such schools before he assented to grants being given them. By that, presumably, he meant their utility from a national point of view. In order to convince the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Commission quoted as a remarkable instance of what education had done for Denmark, her imports of butter to this country having increased from 80,589 cwt. in 1867 to 210,322 cwt. in 1877, and to 487,603 cwt. in 1887. But this increase might be accounted for by studying the prices realized, which were as follows:—104*s.* per cwt. in 1867, 128*s.* in 1877, and 109*s.* in 1887. No doubt that 104*s.* in 1867 paid the Danish farmer. When, therefore, the price rose to 128*s.* in 1877, it showed an undue margin of profit, and stimulated him to further efforts, and the production had increased in proportion. But the question was if there were many farmers who would be satisfied with such a price for their butter on the average of 12 months, except in the most primitive districts, and if the dairy produce made in England was of an inferior character to that imported from Denmark or elsewhere—if this were proved, then, indeed, we had reason to inquire what could be done to raise the standard of home-made goods; but even in that case it rested with the landowners to improve the produce of their estates. If we were living under a system of peasant proprietors—or even as in Denmark, where the soil was greatly subdivided owing partly to the state of the law, which interdicted the union of small farms into large estates, but encouraged in various ways the parcelling out of landed property, and left the tenant entire control of his land so long as the rent was paid—it might be advisable to aid those who were unable to acquire the knowledge necessary for obtaining the best return from their holdings. But with large estates and well-organized, powerful agricultural societies, such as the Royal Agricultural Society, with 9,000 members, and subscriptions amounting to £9,000 annually, it did seem unnecessary to subsidize new schools. As Professor Wrightson observed last week, in the Paper he read before the Society of Arts, the paternal principle of government had never found favour in England. Almost everything in the way of advancement was left to private and corporate enterprize, and the results of this system of self-help had been magnificent. Further on he said—

"Dairy farmers, the men above all others singled out for assistance, have been exceptionally fortunate. No class of men have progressed more rapidly with the times. They have wiped out the obloquy of a few years ago with regard to the alleged inferiority of their butter and cheese, and these English products are once more equal, if not superior, to those imported from Denmark, Brittany, and Normandy."

With this opinion and the evidence gained from the Agricultural Returns, it would be absurd to say that dairy farmers had not made great strides of late years in Great Britain; and they would undoubtedly continue to do so on those estates where the tenants were not paralyzed by too heavy payments of rent, tithe, and taxes. If, however, they were overburdened with charges of this description, they would be unable to hold their own when brought into competition with the whole world, and no amount of State-aided education would achieve the desired result—that of enabling them to pay such an interest on their capital as would satisfy their requirements. In conclusion, he would urge on Her Majesty's Government, if they saw the advisability of acceding to the recommendations of the Commission, not to enter into the speculation suggested of buying a 200-acre farm near Rugby for, say, £12,000, but to hand over the money to the Royal Agricultural Societies of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to be utilized by them in disseminating dairy knowledge throughout the entire Kingdom, a course not involving the present or any succeeding Government in an obligation to continue such grants, and one that would from the past history of those societies assure the money being expended for the benefit of practical agriculture.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, that the special knowledge which was known to be possessed by the noble Lord who had just spoken would induce their Lordships to attach great weight to his observations. With respect to the Question that was put by the noble Lord behind him, he felt some difficulty in answering it. A Question had been put in the other House, and the Government intimated that a Minister of Agriculture was to be appointed, if Parliament should sanction it, with whom it would naturally rest to determine what should be done in the matter. As Head, at present, of the Department charged with the interests of agriculture, he might say that, even without adopting the suggestions of the Commission as embodied in their Report, he still felt that there would be many opportunities, in the course of the present year, of rendering assistance to some extent in aid of local effort, and in consonance with the principle of self-help which the noble Lord opposite had just commended. He regretted very much that the two Reports had not been accompanied by the Evidence. It was in print, but he could not say how soon it would be laid before the House. He would, however, take steps to ascertain how soon it could be produced, because it was very desirable that those who took a special interest in the matter should be cognizant of the Evidence which had been laid before the Commission. It would be observed that in that Commission, as in many others, a good many leading questions were put, which showed pretty clearly the bias which suggested them. When witnesses had a pecuniary subsidy dangled before their eyes, it was not to be expected that they should have the moral courage of the noble Lord opposite and say they would rather not have it. There were some who, to a certain extent, did so; but it would be found that some of those who managed dairies skilfully and with success fully appreciated the value of their own excellent practice. Many inquiries had been made of him by deputations and others upon this subject. A large deputation from Scotland had asked that whatever assistance was given should be extended equitably to that country, and had urged that too much importance was attached to dairies in comparison with other branches of agriculture. Indeed, they said that the least depressed interest was that of dairy farming, and that other departments of agriculture required more teaching and more assistance than dairy farming, while they by no means desired to check any support to that calling. There had not been much done in the way of practical teaching in connection with the Science and Art Department. A certain amount was expended from year to year; but it was mainly upon what might be called theoretical teaching and book learning rather than practical agriculture. There was a time when there was in this country agricultural instruction connected with elementary schools; but it was done away with, because it was found that it interfered with the gaining of grants for general education. In agricultural districts boys left the elementary schools at an early age, and it was necessary that they should in early youth acquire a knowledge of horses and other animals, and that was knowledge of a more practical kind than they could acquire by gardens or allotments in the neighbourhood of a school. It might be desirable to provide by small scholarships for assisting some boys to obtain a more scientific knowledge of the business in which they were to be employed. But, after all, he could not help thinking that for the bulk of the lads the best instruction in agriculture would be instruction gained on the land itself. It was impossible in schools, except, perhaps, in evening schools, to gain time for special instruction, and it was to the farmers we must look to train the boys they required to do their work. He had heard that an agricultural school had been recently set up in Glasgow for the training of young farmers. Those were assisted by landlords, and considerable numbers attended the classes from a distance. That seemed to him the right sort of beginning. He could not hold out any hope that anything would be done in the way of distinct State foundations during the present year. The so-called Agricultural Department were not in a position at present to make the inquiries which would be necessary for an undertaking of such magnitude. He might mention that the Veterinary part of the Department of the Council had met with an approbation throughout the country which was almost remarkable, considering the very unpleasant duties which it had to discharge in enforcing the law with regard to diseased cattle, and endeavouring to prevent the spread of infection. With regard to the Agricultural Department more recently set up, it had been proceeding by degrees; but strong representations had been made to him that it was very desirable there should be greater strength infused into it; and he was of opinion that it needed it. The Department was beginning to attract a great deal of attention throughout the country; and he might promise on its behalf that the representations in question would be carefully considered. He trusted that the agriculturists would succeed in deriving substantial benefit from the new Ministry if established. Practically, his answer amounted to this. He believed the Department would receive from the Chancellor of the Exchequer this year a sum which would be expended in obtaining information as to the real needs of the country, and in giving assistance, as far as possible, to local efforts in testing the advantages which might be derived from the present condition of teaching in this country. The Department did not hold out the expectation that the State was going to do everything; but if the localities showed that they were really in need of assistance by taking steps themselves, the Department would be prepared to assist them this year with a view to further action if, with sufficient knowledge, it was found desirable to go further in the matter.

THE CHESHIRE CONSTABULARY—COMPENSATION TO POLICE—CONSTABLES COOPER AND PROUDLOVE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether they have taken any steps to secure reward or compensation to two police officers named Cooper and Proudlove for the very serious injuries received by them from a gang of thieves near Bowden Station? The circumstances which gave rise to his Question were that a gang of poachers, finding the night too light to go after rabbits, had stolen 17 geese from a farmyard pond. Information had been given to the police, and two officers went after the thieves. They took refuge in a railway hut; but, finding there were only three policemen, they said—"Let us go out and murder them." Accordingly, they went out and so battered the heads of Sergeant Cooper and Police-constable Proudlove that for some time their lives were despaired of. Two men were put on their trial for this affair; one got six months, the other proved an *alibi*. Two other men were tried on the 7th of this month, at Chester, for feloniously wounding the two police officers, and both got eight years' penal servitude. These police officers had shown great courage in pursuing so large a number of thieves, and he thought the Government might well go out of its way to show its approbation of their conduct. He asked the attention of the Government to the fact that in Cheshire and the adjoining counties, with the exception of the district round Liverpool, of late years the gangs of marauders had increased in number and in lawlessness, and he dated this increase from the time Sir William Harcourt occupied the Home Office. It was not owing alone or so much to his speeches at the time of passing the Hares and Rabbits Bill, though those, no doubt, had contributed to this result; but the encouragement to lawlessness and violence which he and his Friends had given in Ireland had had their bad effects in this country also.

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (Earl BROWNLOW): The Government have received a Report from the Chief Constable of Cheshire, from which it appears that these two police officers received very serious injuries while endeavouring to arrest a gang of men who were stealing geese on the night of November 5, 1887. The policemen appear to have displayed great courage and British pluck in the encounter which took place, and I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to their bravery. At the same time, I must point out that it is for the Court of Quarter Sessions, and not for the Government, to take such steps as they think proper to secure reward or compensation to members of the County Police Force, where, in the opinion of the Court, special gallantry has been displayed or serious injuries received in the discharge of their ordinary duties.

HIGH SHERIFFS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the mode of appointment, the duties, and the obligations of the high sheriffs of counties, and to report."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, he had great pleasure in acceding to the Motion on the part of the Government.

Motion *agreed to.*

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Joint Committee with the Committee of the House of Commons appointed to examine into the present system of Private Bill legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of costs and charges: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

Lord Stanley of Alderley

E. Bathurst.
L. Balfour of Burley.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Stalbridge.
L. Kensington.

Ordered, That such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the Commons in the appointment of a chairman.

POOR LAW RELIEF.

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. Abp. Canterbury.
E. Spencer.
E. Milltown.
E. Onslow.
E. Strafford.
E. Kimberley.
V. Gordon (*E. Aberdeen*).
L. Balfour.
L. Hopetoun (*E. Hopetoun*).
L. Thring.

The Committee to meet *To-morrow* at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

Read 1ª; to be *printed;* and to be read 2ª *To-morrow;* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*) (No. 49.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby, *for* the County of Leicester (Eastern or Melton Division).

SELECT COMMITTEE—Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners); Mr. Cremer and Mr. Samuel Hoare *added.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—Customs, Isle of Man—R.P.

Ordered—First Reading—Secondary Education (Scotland) * [187]; Legal Proceedings (Reports) * [188]; Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment * [189].

Second Reading—Criminal Evidence * [132]; Statute Law Revision * [186]; Mortmain and Charitable Uses * [174]; Westminster Abbey * [165], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Report—Army (Annual) * [179].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt (Conversion) * [164], and *passed.*

Withdrawn — Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) * [147]; Railway Regulation * [84].

QUESTIONS.

MUNICIPAL TOLLS ON GRAIN—CORPORATION OF GUILDFORD.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the

Board of Trade, If it is a fact that the Corporation of Guildford levies a toll on all wheat and other grain, whether British grown or foreign, brought into the municipal market for sale; to what purposes the proceeds are devoted; if any complaint, by either producers, middlemen, or local consumers, has been received upon the subject; and, if there are any other City, Borough, or Harbour Authorities in the United Kingdom, besides the Corporation of London, who, being duly empowered by law, levy a duty upon imports of grain into the locality under their jurisdiction for local purposes?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): With regard to the first part of the Question, the Town Clerk of Guildford informs the Board of Trade that a toll is taken, not on all wheat and other grain brought into the market at Guildford, but only on all wheat sold in the market. This toll is one pint per sack; and the corn taken as toll is ultimately sold, and the proceeds paid into the Treasurer of the Borough to the credit of the Borough Fund—that is, the proceeds are devoted in aid of the borough rate. No complaint has, to the Town Clerk's knowledge, been made to the Corporation by either producers, middlemen, or local consumers on the subject of this toll. With regard to the latter part of the Question—namely, as to whether duties on grain brought into a particular locality are levied by other City, Borough, or Harbour Authorities in the country—the Board of Trade are aware that such duties are levied by some Harbour Authorities, and they believe they are levied by other City and Borough Authorities as regards articles brought into markets; but they have no official information in detail as to what is done by cities and boroughs. As the hon. Member is aware, a Royal Commission is now inquiring as to market rights and tolls.

BRITISH INDIA—ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will provide, for the use of hon. Members of this House, a map showing the additions that have been made to the territory of British India since 1870, by annexation and otherwise; and providing references to the various Treaties, arrangements, and Proclamations under which those additions have been effected?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The only additions of any importance made to the territory of British India since 1870 are Upper Burmah and the districts on the North-Western Frontier. There may have been trifling rectifications of frontier elsewhere, by exchange with Native States, as to which no certain information could be given without reference to India. A map will be prepared and laid upon the Table showing the districts added last year on the North-Western Frontier, with the references asked for. But it is impossible to do the same thing in reference to Upper Burmah, as the frontier still remains to be marked out by the Commission agreed to in the Convention with China of 1886.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (IRELAND) — MR. WATERS, COUNTY COURT JUDGE OF WATERFORD, &c.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been drawn to the numerous instances in which the decisions of Mr. Waters, County Court Judge for the Counties of Waterford, Leitrim, and Cavan, in the exercise of the discretionary jurisdiction entrusted to Chairmen of Quarter Sessions by the Land Act of 1887, have been reversed by Mr. Justice Andrews at the County Cavan Spring Assizes; and, whether he has any power of providing for the consistent administration of justice?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: County Court Judges hold during good behaviour, and the Lord Chancellor has no jurisdiction to interfere with them in the exercise of their judicial discretion. All suitors dissatisfied with the decisions of a County Court Judge in Civil cases can appeal to the Judge of Assize, a right which appears to have been availed of in the instances referred to.

CHILDREN'S DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES ACT, 1879—EXHIBITION IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the public exhibitions of young children in acrobatic and other performances apparently dangerous to the life and limbs of children now taking place in the Metropolis, If it is the duty of the Metropolitan Police, or of the Metropolitan Board of Works, or of what other Public Authority, to take action, where necessary, under the provisions of "The Children's Dangerous Performances Act, 1879?"

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Statute referred to does not give the power, or impose the duty, of taking action upon the police or the Metropolitan Board of Works or any Public Authority. The Act leaves it open to any person, or Society, to initiate a prosecution in a proper case. I understand that there is a Society which has occasionally taken proceedings under this Act.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — FAIR RENTS—SUB-COMMISSION IN LONDONDERRY.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How soon a Sub-Commission will sit in the County of Londonderry to hear applications for a fair rent under the provisions of the Land Act of last year?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that they have not fixed the date for the next sitting of a Sub-Commission in the County Londonderry.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES —MILLBANK PENITENTIARY.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, and when, it is intended to remove Millbank Penitentiary from its present site; and, whether, in the event of its removal, the Government will endeavour to give effect to the suggestion contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, that this site should be used for "workmen's dwellings and for open spaces connected therewith"?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; it is intended to discontinue the use of Millbank Penitentiary in the course of the present year. I can assure my hon. Friend that the Government will endeavour to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners on this head, so far as they can consistently with the provisions of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — JOHN CLARKE AND WIFE, PRISONERS IN SLIGO GAOL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that John Clarke, of Cornakelly, County Longford, and his wife are at present undergoing a term of imprisonment in Sligo Gaol; when, and by whom, were they committed; what is their offence; and, how long are they to be kept in prison?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is the case that the prisoners referred to are in custody in Sligo Gaol. They were committed on the 23rd of August, 1887, by order of the Land Judges for re-taking forcible possession of their holding after they had been evicted by the Sheriff of Longford. They will be released at the expiration of 12 months from the date of their conviction, or on payment of the rent and costs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the order of committal prescribe their release on payment of the rent and costs?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I cannot say.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman repeat that portion of his answer which gave the payment of the rent and costs as a condition precedent to the release?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: They are committed for contempt of Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman repeat the latter part of his answer?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I stated that they would be released in 12 months, or on payment of the rent and costs due.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. and gallant Gentleman state what is the ransom which will procure their release?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; certainly not, without Notice.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—DEPUTY OFFICIAL RECEIVERS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the fact that the powers to appoint Deputy Official Receivers are limited by "The Bankruptcy Act, 1883," to a period not exceeding two months, and that such appointments were intended to be temporary only, he will state for what period or periods a deputy, and who, has been appointed for the Official Receiver for Guildford; and, what steps are taken by the Board of Trade before they nominate a deputy to satisfy themselves that he is a fit person?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): There is at present no Deputy Official Receiver at Guildford; but the Board of Trade have, from time to time, appointed Mr. Britten, the Chief Clerk of the Official Receiver, to act as deputy during his temporary absence, as provided by the Bankruptcy Act. In no case has such appointment exceeded the period of two months specified by the Act. Before any such authority is granted the Board of Trade invariably require a Report upon the qualifications of the Official Receiver's nominee.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION IN MONAGHAN.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When a Sub Commission Court sat under the Land Act in Monaghan; whether he is aware that a large number of tenants served originating notices before November last, and that, although entitled to a reduced rent if decreed by the Court, they are being called upon to pay the full year's rent; and, if he will take steps to expedite the settlement of these cases?

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) also asked, when the Land Sub-Commission will sit in Clones, County Monaghan?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission sat in the County Monaghan during the months of October, November, and December last. No date has yet been fixed for the next sitting. It appears that on one estate in the county a number of tenants served originating notices before November last, and have been called upon to pay the full year's rent; but that, pending the decision of the Court, 20 per cent reduction is allowed to those who pay their rents within a specified time. As I stated in the House the day before yesterday, the Government are anxiously considering the question of the existing arrears in applications awaiting a hearing.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE—THE BRISTOL CHANNEL.

Lord HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any intention of the Government to act upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1859, and of more than one Select Committee, to construct a Harbour of Refuge in the Bristol Channel; and, if so, when it will be commenced; what has been the loss of vessels and lives in the Bristol Channel since the Royal Commission recommended the construction of this Harbour of Refuge; and, whether it is a fact that the shipping trade of the Bristol Channel is at the present moment at least one-fifth part of the whole of England?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The matter to which the noble Lord refers is one in which, as one of the Members for Bristol, I am naturally much interested. I am sorry that I cannot give him the number of vessels lost in the Bristol Channel; but the number of lives lost by wrecks and casualties (excluding collisions and missing vessels) since 1859 is 1,314. The noble Lord is correct in supposing that the shipping trade of the Bristol Channel is about one-fifth part of that of the whole of England. As regards the intentions of the Government, I am afraid, notwithstanding what I have stated, that I can only repeat that the Government have no intention of departing from the policy pursued by successive Governments in past years, under which they have hitherto declined to make grants of money for harbour construction except in cases of Imperial and National necessity.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL—SMALL ANNUITANTS.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can include in the Conversion Scheme a clause by which annuitants of from £20 to £100 per annum shall be provided against any loss in their income, thereby preventing distress and embarrassment, by increasing their poverty, of widows, many with children to support, and other poor people wholly dependent upon small annuities?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, if the hon. Member had followed the course of the Bill dealing with the Conversion of the National Debt, he would have seen that all that could be done had been done by enabling Trustees, with regard to these annuities, to vary the investment, and to invest in the proceeds of such Stock as was liable to conversion into Stocks sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, beyond which it was impossible to go.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—ADVANCES.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statement in *The Standard* of the 16th instant, to the effect—

> "That of the £5,000,000 authorized by Lord Ashbourne's Act to be advanced to tenants for the purchase of their holdings, £4,500,000 had been applied for up to the end of February,"

is correct; and, if so, whether the Government intend, during the present Session, to introduce a Bill to promote the further operation of the said Act?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The amount applied for up to the end of February was £4,700,000; but that includes £390,000 which was refused. The amount applied for and not refused is, therefore, something under the figure stated in the Question. Of this, however, only £3,680,000 has as yet been actually sanctioned; so that there remains considerably over £1,000,000 undisposed of. The Government are carefully considering the question as to the course which it may be best to pursue in these circumstances.

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF MAILS TO THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster General, Why the Post Office pays £2,500 a-year for an acceleration of the down London day mail from Aberdeen to Keith, where there is a limited population, and refuses to accelerate the same mail from Perth to the North, embracing a district of seven counties, containing a population of nearly 400,000 people?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The so-called acceleration of the down London day mail from Aberdeen to Keith consisted chiefly in the abolition of the interval of several hours which previously existed between the arrival of the mail train from the South at Aberdeen and the despatch Northward. The new arrangement, while effecting this object and providing for an earlier delivery of a large amount of correspondence, also secured a convenient through service for mails from Aberdeenshire to the North, *viâ* Inverness. The case of the down London day mail from Perth, on the Highland Railway, is very different. There is no undue detention at Perth to get rid of. The line from Perth to Thurso and Wick runs for several hundred miles through sparsely-populated districts with few towns of any considerable size except Inverness; and there is already expended on the conveyance of the mails, which includes two through mails a-day in each direction, so large a payment that no additional expense for the purpose of accelerating either service will be warranted.

POST OFFICE—UNIFORMS IN LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the case that vests are supplied as part of Post Office uniform to first-class postmen in London, whilst vests, at one time supplied, are no longer supplied to first-class postmen in Edinburgh; if so, what is the reason for the discontinuance of that article of clothing in the case of Edinburgh; and, whether, if postmen can go without vests in Edinburgh, they cannot equally go without them in London?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Vests are supplied to the first-class town postmen in London. Vests have at no time been supplied to postmen in Edinburgh. Postmen in Edinburgh are supplied with a tunic which should always be worn buttoned; therefore, the necessity for a vest does not exist. Postmen in London are supplied with an open coat, for which a vest is needed; hence the difference between the two classes of uniform.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE IN COUNTY CLARE.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Sergeant Noble, of the Quinn Police Barrack, County Clare, has been looking for the site of a police hut, wherein extra police are to be placed, within sight of the priest's residence; whether the regular County Force consists of 549 men and nine officers, or about one to every 280 of the population; whether this Force is sufficient to carry out the law; and, for what purpose is it proposed to quarter extra men in sight of the priest's house?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sir, I am informed that the sergeant referred to did look for a site for a police hut at a place which happens to be within view of the priest's residence; but that circumstance had nothing whatever to do with its selection. The nominal County Force consists of 549 men and nine officers, or about one man to every 257 of the population. The portion of the Force available for Quinn and its neighbourhood has recently been obliged to be frequently strengthened by sending extra police there to suppress illegal meetings; and to obviate the necessity and expense of sending these men the Divisional Magistrate has been considering the question of quartering a reserve force in the locality, which will be chargeable therewith.

MR. DILLON: Would the right hon. and gallant Gentleman inform the House, whether any illegal meetings have been held in that district; and, whether any crime or outrage has recently taken place in the district?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Illegal meetings have been held—or are reported to have been held—in the district.

MR. DILLON: Do I understand the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to say that because meetings have been reported to have been held extra police have been sent in? I would remind the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that he stated to me in this House, only a fortnight ago, that these reports would not be accepted as evidence that the meetings were held.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The evidence we have is statements that meetings have been held; and that meetings will be held, no matter whether extra police are brought in or not.

EGYPT—THE NEW EGYPTIAN LOAN.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement in Sir Evelyn Baring's last Despatch to the Marquess of Salisbury, to the effect that the new Egyptian Loan was to be for £E5,000,000; and, whether this is true; and, if so, for what purposes the money is required?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The exact amount of the new Loan, as has been already stated, has not been positively settled, so far, at least, as Her Majesty's Government are aware. The chief objects are those already explained—namely, to carry out the arrangement made with the ex-Khedive and his family, which requires the liberation of lands pledged in security for the Domains Loan; and, secondly, to liberate lands similarly pledged to be granted to pensioners in commutation of their allowances. It will depend on the amount of the Loan how far the operation of converting pensions into grants of Domain Land is carried. As such conversions operate to the relief of the Egyptian Exchequer, the operation is, from a financial point of view, sound and desirable, provided the Loan can be effected on advantageous terms.

Mr. DILLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what position the new Loan will hold with regard to the Privileged Unified Loan?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: The new Loan must rank after the old one.

POST OFFICE—AUSTRALIAN AND CAPE LETTERS—OVERWEIGHT.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Has his attention been called to the fact that, if any letter posted for Australia or the Cape of Good Hope happens to weigh a grain over half an ounce, the charge for postage is doubled—that is, from 6*d.* to 1*s.*; and, has he any intention to alter this Regulation, or consult with the Colonial Governments on the question?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): It is quite true that a letter exceeding the prescribed weight allowed for a single rate of postage is charged an additional postage rate. This Rule applies generally to letters for all parts of the world, and not alone to Australia and the Cape of Good Hope. Obviously, a limit of weight must be fixed in all cases; and I have no intention, as at present advised, of proposing any exception from the practice which has universally obtained with respect to this matter.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE GRANTHAM BOROUGH BENCH—HEAVY SENTENCE.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) (for Mr. Broadhurst) (Nottingham, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a sentence of seven days' hard labour, passed by the Grantham Borough Bench upon an old man of 73 years of age, for the offence of going into a greengrocer's shop and begging for an onion; and, if so, whether he can consider the advisability of mitigating this sentence?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the convicting magistrate on this case, from which it appears that this man has been well known to the police and to the magistrate personally for many years as a regular and persistent able-bodied beggar. I am told that he has for a long time been a nuisance to passengers in the streets, to tradesmen, and especially to females. Frequent complaints of his conduct have been made to the police. He gave his age to the police as 67, and not 73. Under the circumstances, I cannot advise any interference with the sentence.

INDIA—THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will consent to a Return showing the amounts paid during the past three years by the Government of India to the Irrawaddy Flotilla; and, in what respect, under what conditions, and for what services, such moneys have been paid?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The Secretary of State will consult the Government of India as to the expediency of having such a Return prepared. It would take some time, as the information would have to be procured from Burmah. The moneys are paid under contract with the Company for the conveyance of mails, troops, stores, prisoners, police, &c.

Mr. BRADLAUGH inquired, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that great dissatisfaction was expressed in Burmah and India as to the amounts received by the Company?

Sir JOHN GORST: No; I cannot admit that fact.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CONVICTIONS AT BALLINAMORE BRIDGE.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Messrs. Ferguson and Finlay, who were prosecuted at the late Petty Sessions at Ballinamore Bridge, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for speaking at a meeting held at Newbridge, and the latter gentleman convicted on the evidence of constables who took no notes at the meeting; whether a car driver who refused to carry police, not having been employed for the purpose, was prevented for some time from going home by Mr. Purcell, R.M., and his horse and car forcibly seized; under what statute Mr. Purcell acted in having him detained; whether, in the disturbance which took place in consequence of the action of the police, several parties were arrested; whether the prisoners were assaulted by the police on their way to and while in the barrack in custody; whether Mr. Purcell refused substantial bail for the appearance of the prisoners, both on that occasion and after two subsequent remands; and, whether the prisoners will have been detained a month in custody before the date of the monthly Petty Sessions?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The prosecutions referred to were for speeches urging the people to enter into an unlawful conspiracy. Finlay was convicted on the evidence of the police, who had noted the proceedings immediately after the meeting at which he spoke. As regards the car driver, he had been employed by Mr. Beckett, one of the Resident Magistrates, to convey him between Ballinasloe and Ballinamore; but he refused to drive him back to Ballinasloe, as the Resident Magistrate wished to have a constable accompanying him. Mr. Beckett was, therefore, obliged to proceed by another car, along with the Sessional Crown Solicitor, who had conducted the prosecution. The demeanour of the car driver in question was offensive and defiant; and Mr. Purcell did not consider it advisable to allow him to follow immediately after the two gentlemen named, as his doing so would have led to a hostile demonstration and a breach of the peace, as at the time a great many people were about. Mr. Purcell accordingly detained him for about 15 minutes. He did so by virtue of his office as a magistrate, and to prevent a breach of the peace. A policeman who got upon the car was savagely attacked by a number of men with sticks and severely injured. Other members of the constabulary were struck with stones, and otherwise assaulted. For these assaults four men were arrested and remanded for a week to Galway Prison. There does not appear to be any ground for the allegation of an assault by the police. The attack upon the police was wanton and unprovoked. The Resident Magistrate did refuse bail. The prisoner's solicitor, in making application for a consent to bail on the expiration of the first remand, stated in his letter that if the bail were refused the Queen's Bench would interfere; but he does not appear to have brought the matter before that Court. The prisoners will have been detained a month in custody, if not discharged before next Petty Sessions at Ballinamore.

MR. HAYDEN: Does the right hon. and gallant Gentleman deny that the prisoners were assaulted after arrest by the police in the barrack?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I have no information to the effect that they were. I know that the police were violently assaulted before.

NAVY—H.M.S. "HERO."

MR. LEATHAM BRIGHT (Stoke-upon-Trent) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Government is aware that iron girders have been placed under the engines of the *Hero* for the purpose of strengthening them; whether these girders have been placed in position by the responsible engineers of the Government; and who is to bear the expense of the alteration?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Some small additional strengthening brackets have been fitted to the engine bearers of the *Hero*. Being part of the hull structure, they were fitted in place by the Dockyard; and as all work on engine bearers, including these additions, is outside the engine contract, the expense is borne by the Admiralty.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE LAKE IN BATTERSEA PARK.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether he is aware that the Lake in Battersea Park is in a foul and dangerous state, and contains 19 inches of silt and mud; and, whether it is the intention of the Metropolitan Board of Works to remedy the evil without delay?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that the Metropolitan Board of Works was aware of the bad condition of the Lake; and measures would be immediately taken by the Board to clear away the deposit from the bottom of the Lake, and to restore the piece of Ornamental Water to a good condition.

TORQUAY HARBOUR AND DISTRICT ACT, 1886—THE SALVATION ARMY.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a statement, signed by 500 ratepayers of Torquay, as follows:—

> "That we have known the Salvation Army to conduct marches with music through the streets of our town on Sundays and week days, ever since the commencement of their services here six years ago; that we did not know that it was proposed to insert in the Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886, any clause prohibiting such marches, and that such clause only came to our knowledge after the passing of the Act; that it is not our wish that any member of the Salvation Army should be fined or imprisoned for taking part in such processions;"

and, whether he would be prepared to consider the advisability of a Standing Order relating to Private Bills which should require that any Bill containing Police Clauses should bear the word "Police" in its title?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a statement to the effect described in the Question. The hon. Member is, doubtless, aware that by Standing Order 173a Committees of this House are required to bring clauses of this kind to the notice of the House by specially reporting upon them; and by Standing Order 33a, passed last year at the instance of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), Bills proposing to create—

> "Powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from or are repugnant to the general laws,"

have to be deposited at the Home Office. In the case of the Torquay Bill, 1886, the Home Office reported against the clause in question, on the ground that it was—

> "A question for general legislation and should be struck out."

I do not see that the proposal of the hon. Member would add much to these existing safeguards; but if he will place on the Paper such a Standing Order as he suggests, I shall be glad to consult with the Authorities of the House as to the propriety of its passing.

THE LICENSING LAWS—CLUBS.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to the proposals for diminishing the number of licensed public houses, it is the intention of the Government, during the present Session, to bring in a Bill dealing with Clubs in which intoxicating liquors are sold, with a view to diminishing their number, and placing them under the like restrictions and charges as public houses?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The question is how to deal with Bogus Clubs, of which complaint is so justly made, without unduly interfering with the *bonâ fide* Club. It is a very important question; but it is also one very difficult of solution. As my hon. and learned Friend knows, the Government has been considering the matter, and is still considering it; and I shall be very glad, indeed, if we can see any way of dealing with it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

BARON DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin) (for Mr. KENYON) (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the proposals made by the President of the Local Government Board, which may affect the position of the Metropolitan Board of Works, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to persevere with the appointment of a Royal Commission; and, whether any steps will be taken to limit the powers of the Board, *ad interim*, as regards their expenditure on sewerage experiments?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; certainly. The Government were aware of these proposals when they assented to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the past working of the Board. The Government are not in possession of any information to justify their interference with the progress of any works now being undertaken by the Board.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would state the names of the Commissioners the Government proposed to appoint, and when the Bill would be introduced into the House; or, if he could not answer the Questions now, when would he be able to do so? He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that five weeks or more had elapsed since the promise of the Government was made.

Mr. MATTHEWS: In answer to my noble Friend, I have to state that the Commissioners have been appointed. They are Lord Herschell, who presides over the Commission, a well-known and eminent Queen's Counsel; Mr. Bosanquet; and a Director of the Bank of England, Mr. Henry Grenfell. Instructions have been given for drafting the Bill to constitute the Commission, and it will be brought forward with as little dely as possible.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) asked, whether the inquiry respecting the Metropolitan Board of Works would be retrospective?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, his recollection was that the Reference to the Commission was precisely in the terms of the Motion of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill)—an inquiry "into the working" of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He understood that would include the whole of the working from the beginning; but he assumed the Commissioners would exercise some discretion as to the manner in which they would conduct the inquiry.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE FRENCH PROTECTORATE OVER SENEGAL, &c.

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government can communicate any information relative to the Protectorate, which it is reported the French Governor of Senegal has established, and also relative to the rule which he is endeavouring to administer over a part of the Gambia Territories, which for many years have formed part of the British Dependencies on the West Coast of Africa; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government is taking to obtain the withdrawal of French troops and the restoration of British influence in these territories?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The French have not formally declared any Protectorate in the manner stated in the Question, but have lately advanced into territories bordering on the River Gambia. They have, however, checked their progress in deference to representations from Her Majesty's Government, with a view to friendly discussion of the question of boundaries and of spheres of influence.

LAW AND POLICE — ASSAULTS ON CHILDREN — SENTENCE ON ANN GUTHRIE.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Ann Guthrie, charged before the magistrates at the City Police Court, at Liverpool, on Friday last, with assaulting Mary Conroy, aged 13 years; whether it was proved that Guthrie, after repeated assaults, had finally broken the child's arm by kicking; whether the magistrates informed Guthrie that she was liable to six months' imprisonment, but afterwards permitted her to leave the Court on paying a compensation of £5; and, whether he will take steps to secure the better protection of children from savage assaults resulting in serious physical injuries, by insuring that those guilty of such assaults shall be adequately punished?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Justices on this case, who inform me that, although the woman had struck the child repeatedly with a boot, it was not proved to their satisfaction that the child's arm had been broken by kicking. A lodger in defendant's house stated that he had not on any previous occasion known the woman to ill-use the child, who appeared to be habitually well treated. The defendant expressed regret that she had lost her temper on the occasion in question. It is true that the defendant was informed by the magistrates that she had rendered herself liable to six months' imprisonment; but as the injury seemed to them one for which the girl ought to receive compensation, and as in case of conviction she would be debarred from enforcing any such claim, they deemed it best in her interest to allow the summons to be withdrawn on payment of £5 (to be invested in the girl's name in the Post Office Savings Bank) and £1 1*s.* costs. The hon. Member is aware that I cannot increase the punishment imposed by magistrates in the exercise of the discretion which the law allows them.

Mr. CHANNING said, the medical testimony was to the effect that the child's arm was fractured. Would the Home Secretary take steps to prevent such cases being settled by compensation?

Mr. MATTHEWS replied, that the information he had received as to the medical testimony was directly contrary to that of the hon. Member.

ROYALTIES—COAL AND OTHER MINERALS.

Mr. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the estimated amount of royalties paid on the output on coal, ironstone, and other minerals in the United Kingdom; and, what portion, if any, of those royalties contribute towards local taxation?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, he was unable to give the Return asked for by the hon. Gentleman. The Income Tax Returns did not show the amount paid for royalties; and the Local Government Board, to whom he had applied, had no information on the subject.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, if the hon. Gentleman was aware that a single owner, in a single county, drew £140,000 a-year from royalties, and another £40,000 from wayleave rents, without contributing one farthing to local taxation?

Mr. JACKSON said, he had no information on the matter.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the facts he had referred to were not disclosed in a Return which had been presented to that House?

[No reply.]

LONDON COAL AND WINE DUES CONTINUANCE BILL.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the hon. Baronet the Senior Member for the City of London, Whether, after the statement of the President of the Local Government Board last night as to the constitution of a new Metropolitan Authority, it is the intention of the Corporation of London to proceed with the Coal and Wine Dues Continuance Bill?

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) (who replied) said, it was the intention of the Corporation and the Metropolitan Board of Works, the promoters of the Bill, to proceed with it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) — PAYMENTS TO ROAD CONTRACTORS, TIPPERARY, N.R.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the moneys earned by the road contractors in the North Riding of the County of Tipperary for a period of eight months came due at the recent Assizes at Nenagh on the 5th and 6th instants, when, as usual, cheques for payment should be issued; whether these contractors, numbering over 500, mostly poor men, are yet unpaid; whether many of them reside at a distance of 20 miles from Nenagh, where they have had to come applying for their money; and, whether complaints have reached him that this is owing to the neglect of "the Clerk of the Crown and Peace" in not signing the cheques duly certified for; and, if so, whether he will have instructions issued to that official to have the payments made without further delay?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Clerk of the Crown and Peace reports that a few days must necessarily elapse after the Assizes are over before payments can be made to contractors. When the presentments are fiated by the Judge of Assize, the Secretary to the Grand Jury has to prepare a draft in favour of each contractor, which is then submitted to the Clerk of the Crown and Peace, who has to examine it carefully with the original presentment before he countersigns it. The presentments are very numerous, and necessarily require some days for examination. He does not believe there is a single contractor still unpaid. In the case of those who came to him, even before the Assizes had closed, and represented that they lived at a distance, he at once, at great personal inconvenience, examined and countersigned the drafts; and the next day, before leaving to attend the Clonmel Assizes, he signed as many drafts as were then ready. He, however, cannot undertake in future to have all the drafts ready until about one week after the Assizes are over, which appears to be also the practice in other counties; and of this the contractors have been already fully informed.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN asked the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, is it not the invariable practice that payment should be made before the expiration of Assizes; and, also, whether, under any circumstances, compensation will be made to those poor men for their loss of time and the expense that they have incurred in journeying several times to and from the Assize Court, sometimes a distance of more than 20 miles?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: So far as I can understand, an irregular and objectionable practice has prevailed in the North Riding of Tipperary—that of contractors coming and asking for payment even before the presentments have been fiated. That appears to be a very irregular proceeding, and the present Clerk of the Crown has very properly laid down another rule.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN: The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has not answered the Question. I asked him, does he say that it was not the invariable practice to have the payments made beforehand?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I should say it was not. I do not think it possible it could have been. What I am informed is that that practice had prevailed. I suppose it began by obliging one or two contractors, and then came to be an abuse and could not be continued.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, whether it is not a fact that the fiating of these presentments is not the first duty that a Judge performs at the Assize?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Yes, Sir. These presentments are passed by the Grand Jury and then fiated by the learned Judge. But they have then to go through the hands of the Secretary to the Grand Jury, who has other multifarious duties to attend to, and they are then carefully revised and gone through by the Clerk of the Crown. As I have already explained, it is manifestly impossible to have all these duties performed in a short time.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL —SMALL HOLDERS.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked the Postmaster General, Whether any information will be circulated by the Post Office to the holders of small amounts of Government Securities with reference to the conversion; and, whether instructions have been given to secure the full and effective publication of this information, by notices exhibited at the Post Offices and otherwise?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): A Memorandum giving full information on the subject has been printed by my direction, and this will be exhibited at all Post Offices, and copies will be supplied to Postmasters, &c., for distribution.

CHINA (INLAND NAVIGATION)—THE YANGTSZE KIANG.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) (for Sir Richard Temple) (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state the latest result of the communications between the British Representatives and the Chinese Authorities on the Yangtsze Kiang regarding the upward passage of the British steamer now lying near the rapids of that River?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The latest information received on this subject from Her Majesty's Minister in China is dated the 19th instant, to the effect that in the early part of last month the Yâmen had caused a Proclamation to be issued by the Authorities at Tchang, warning the public that a steamer would start on the journey to Ching King, on the Upper Yangtsze River; that the steamer had a right to do so; that native interests would not suffer thereby; and that any attempt at interference would be severely punished.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATIONS FOR "FAIR RENTS."

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the list of fair rent cases to be heard at Banbridge on the 4th of April next does not include any of the applications made immediately before the 1st of November last by tenants on the estates of Baron Trevor and the other large landed proprietors in the County of Down; whether he can state why, contrary to precedent, the Banbridge list includes a large number of applications from Downpatrick Union, and why no special list was published for Downpatrick; and, if he can say at what dates sittings of a Sub-Commission will be held to hear the fair rent applications of the leaseholders and present tenants from the Unions of Banbridge and Downpatrick who are entitled to the benefit of the reduction in respect of the half-year's rent due at 1st November last?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners are at present on Circuit in the County Clare, and they are unable to furnish the required information until Saturday next.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885 —THE TENANTS OF THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the two Circulars recently sent to the County Down tenants of the Lord Lieutenant, signed by His Excellency's land agent, Mr. Brownlow, in which the Marquess of Londonderry holds out strong inducements to the tenants to purchase their holdings, and declares his inability to continue to give to his tenants the reduction—

> "Which he has granted the last two years, and by giving which he has received absolutely nothing from his own property;"

whether he is aware that owing to charges on the Londonderry estates created by the late Marquess of Londonderry, and not on account of any default on the part of the tenants, or by reason of any benefits given to them by the landlord, this inability to accept a reduced rent arises; and, whether, considering that according to present arrangements none of the fair rent applications made by the tenants of the Marquess of Londonderry are to be listed for hearing at the first sitting of the County Down Sub-Commission at Newtownards in May next, and considering that nearly 4,000 applications from County Down still remain unheard, he will now take steps to have an additional Sub-Commission appointed for that county?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: My attention has been called to the Circulars in question through the hon. Member who puts this Question sending them to me. I have no knowledge as to whether the inability to accept a reduced rent arises from charges on the estate created by the late owner or otherwise. As has been stated, the Government are anxiously considering the steps to be taken to deal with the arrears of business in the Land Commission.

CRIMINAL LAW — CONVICTION OF JOHN RUSSELL AT BIRMINGHAM ASSIZES.

SIR JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to the report of the trial at Birmingham Assizes of John Russell, aged 60, alias Cooper and "Australian Jemmy," who was sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude for burglariously entering the house of Dr. Robins, surgeon, Grantham Road, Birmingham, when Mr. Justice Smith, in passing sentence, said the prisoner had been twice sentenced to transportation for life, and also to 10 years' penal servitude for burglary with violence; and, since after two life sentences he has been set at liberty, when under the present system this offender will be again at large?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): This convict's career is remarkable. In 1850 he was sentenced to transportation for life for burglary. This sentence was reduced to one of 10 years by the Secretary of State in 1853, at the end of which time he was pardoned. It 1861 he was again sentenced to transportation for life for wounding with intent; but he seems to have escaped from Australia by some means or other, for in 1875 he was sentenced in this country to 10 years' penal servitude for sacrilege. He served the whole of this sentence, and he is now again under a sentence of 15 years. In the ordinary course, if he behaves well, he will be due for release in 11 years five months, unless, possibly, the life sentence were to be enforced.

INLAND REVENUE—EXCISE LICENCES—THE EMPIRE THEATRE, LEICESTER SQUARE.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Excise Authorities are aware that wines, spirits, and beer are nightly sold by retail at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, London, no magistrates' licence having been granted for the sale of excisable articles upon such premises; why the persons concerned in such sales have not been proceeded against by the Excise Authorities; and, whether it is the intention of the Authorities to institute proceedings?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Commissioners of Inland Revenue are aware that intoxicating liquors are sold by retail at the Empire Theatre. After the theatre had been licensed by the Justices as a place of public entertainment, an application was made to the Commissioners to issue an Excise licence for the sale of liquors there under Section 7 of the Act 5 & 6 *Will.* IV. c. 39; but the Commissioners were advised that since the passing of the Licensing Act of 1872, they had ceased to have the power to issue a licence in England under that section for any place except a theatre. The point, however, is not free from doubt; and a Rule *Nisi* for a *mandamus* to compel the Commissioners to issue the licence was granted by the Court of Queen's Bench on the 13th of December last. Upon service of this Rule the Commissioners felt they were not justified in objecting to the sale of liquors, or in taking any steps which might have the effect of postponing the opening of the house, and throwing a large number of persons out of employment. They, therefore, accepted a deposit of the amount of duty which would be payable on the licence, pending the argument of the Rule. It is expected that the Rule will come on for argument in the course of next month.

DR. CLARK asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that last year an application was made to the magistrates for a licence, which was refused, and that power was only given to the Commissioners to grant a special licence of three days, and that those three days had been going on ever since Christmas of last year?

MR. GOSCHEN: The Commissioners have not granted a licence, but a Rule *Nisi* for a *mandamus* to compel them to do so has been granted; and it is in consequence of that that the sale of intoxicating liquors at the theatre has been permitted. If the Commissioners are held to have been right in refusing the licence, of course the sale will be stopped.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL—REDEMPTION OF UNCONVERTED STOCKS.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in order that holders of Consols and Reduced Stock may know exactly what is the alternative to immediate conversion of their Stocks into new Stock, he will state whether a year's notice will be given immediately after the 11th May of the redemption of all or any unconverted Stocks; and, if not, when it will be given; and, is another Act of Parliament necessary to enable the notice to be given, or to redeem the Stocks not now converted; and, if so, whether he proposes to introduce the Bill during this Session?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am unable to state at present when or where this notice will be given. I shall not be able to make such a statement until the result of the conversion of the New Threes is practically known and decided. Another Act of Parliament is not necessary to give the notice, but a Resolution of the House would be necessary; and I hope, within a short time, to be able to state whether I shall propose to the House to pass that Resolution or not.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether any Act of Parliament is necessary to redeem the Stock.

MR. GOSCHEN: A Resolution of notice for paying off the Stock by instalments is sufficient for the purpose; but if larger measures were proposed, it might to necessary to pass an Act of Parliament to direct the mode and manner in which the payment should be made.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

SIR JOHN DORINGTON (Gloucester, Tewkesbury) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could lay upon the Table before the Easter Recess a Paper showing the probable number of members of the County Councils for each of the counties in England and Wales under the new Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No, Sir; it will be impossible for us to lay this on the Table before Easter. It is a matter which necessitates much investigation. I will, however, undertake to lay it on the Table before the Bill leaves Committee.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE EDENDERRY UNION.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he can arrange for the Land Commissioners to hear the large number of cases in the Edenderry Union, and so relieve the tenants from the hardships of further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: A Sub-Commission will sit next month for that portion of the Edenderry Union which is in the County Meath. No sitting has yet been fixed for the other portions of the Union.

DR. FOX: Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that nearly four years have elapsed since a sitting has been held in the King's County Division, or know that there are several hundred cases to be disposed of?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: If the hon. Gentleman will put a Notice on the Paper I will make inquiries.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): This is a matter of very great importance. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has stated several times that the Government were giving their most anxious consideration to this vital question. ["Order, order!"] If necessary, I will move the adjournment of the House, in order to call attention to the question as a matter of urgent public importance. I wish to ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman if he can give us any idea, as it is four years since the Sub-Commissioners sat in Edenderry Union, when his anxious consideration and the anxious consideration of the Government is supposed to begin, and when it is likely to come to a conclusion?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I should be exceedingly surprised if I discovered that it was four years, or anything approaching four years, since the Sub-Commissioners sat in the King's County Division of the Edenderry Union.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): It is now four weeks ago since the right hon. and gallant Gentleman told me that the Government were anxiously considering whether they should increase the number of Sub-Commissioners. I wish to know whether the Government are not only going to take the question into consideration, but are going to keep it there?

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, as the Head of Her Majesty's Government, for an answer in reference to this important question, the delay in reference to which, he must be aware, is causing a number of tenants to be turned into caretakers. When will Her Majesty's Government be able to appoint a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners to deal with the glut of Land Commissioners' work which now prevails in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): This matter has received, and is receiving, the very serious consideration of the Government, who are desirous of dealing with the question at the earliest possible moment. But it is one which requires very careful consideration. [An hon. MEMBER: Ten years.] Having regard to the fact that the Land Commission itself is on the point of expiring, there will be no delay whatever in dealing with the matter.

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS AND COTTARS IN ELGIN, &c.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Will the Government agree to a Return of the number of Crofters and Cottars in the Counties of Elgin, Nairn, Banff, Aberdeen, Perth, and Stirling?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): As I have repeatedly stated in this House, the expressions "crofter" and "cottar" do not convey the same meaning in different parts of Scotland. Such a Return as the hon. Member proposes would, therefore, be misleading. Besides, there is no machinery for taking such a Return, and the Government, therefore, cannot assent to it.

Mr. ANDERSON asked, whether the words did not convey the same meaning in the Counties of Elgin and Nairn, Banff and Aberdeen.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he could not name the counties; but it was undoubtedly the case that the words had not the same meaning in all the counties referred to in the Question.

IRELAND—THE ENGLISH DEPUTATION.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that an English deputation who recently visited Ireland were watched and followed from place to place by policemen and detectives; if so, whether such a course was taken at the request of Her Majesty's Government; whether any Reports were made to the Government; and, whether such Reports will be laid upon the Table of the House?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: If the hon. Member is so good as to mention the English deputation to which he refers, I shall be glad to give him the information.

ORDER (METROPOLIS)—THE SPECIAL CONSTABLES.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will state the total cost incurred in consequence of the recent swearing-in of special constables within the Metropolitan District; and, whether he will lay upon the Table an account of the items of expenditure?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) in reply, said, the total cost incurred was a fraction over £1,500, of which £1,033 odd were for truncheons and badges, and somewhat under £100 for rent and lighting of offices, and miscellaneous expenses made up the balance. He did not think any useful purpose would be served by laying the accounts on the Table.

LAW AND JUSTICE—DELAYS IN THE CITY OF LONDON COURT.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been drawn to a Petition, recently presented to the Lord Chancellor, in reference to delays in the conduct of business in the City of London Court; and, whether he is able to say whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): My attention has been called to the Petition referred to in the Question of the hon. Member. It is certainly signed by gentlemen who have great experience with reference to business in the City of London Court. The matter is under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor, and I will see that the attention of the City Authorities is also called to the Petition.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—MEMBERS' PLACES.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the inconvenience at present existing with regard to Members serving on Select Committees who wish to secure places in the House; and, whether he will give facilities for the discussion of the new Rule of Procedure on that subject standing in the name of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hereford (Sir Joseph Bailey), and the Amendment thereto by the hon. Member for North Essex.

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) (in reply) said, he was aware that hon. Gentlemen serving on Select Committees were exposed to considerable inconvenience in regard to the seats they desired to occupy in the House. He thought the question was one which deserved consideration. He hoped the Motion of the hon. Member for Hereford would be reached in time. Any assistance he could give in the solution of the difficulty would be heartily given.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any general official objection, pending the decision of the Royal Commission on Civil Service Departments, to any Civil Servant in this country being a member of the "Irish National League of Great Britain;" and, whether the question is left by the Treasury to be separately decided by the Heads of the several Departments?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): No circumstances have as yet come to my knowledge which would require special Regulations to be issued as to Civil Servants joining the National League of Great Britain. As I have before stated, much must be left to the discretion of Civil Servants themselves; and, while we strongly deprecate overt acts indicating violent partizanship, we are unwilling to attempt too vigorously to define the precise limits within which the political opinion of Civil servants may legitimately find expression.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would say specifically whether it was left to the discretion of the Heads of different Departments to decide whether A might belong to the Primrose League and that B could not belong to the National League of Great Britain?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I do not think that any such authority exists with the Heads of Departments as that which is suggested by the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

Subsequently,

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that as he had not been able to obtain a clear idea of the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman another Question. It was this—whether those Members of the Civil Service of Great Britain, many in number, who belonged to the National League, were by so belonging infringing any Rule which exists in the Civil Service generally; and, whether they are to look to the Treasury for legality for their position, or look to the Heads of their several Departments?

Mr. W. H. Smith

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was sorry he could not add anything to the answer given to the hon. Member.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have not given him Notice, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to initiate legislation to carry out the Resolution on the subject of Irish Arrears passed by this House yesterday?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) Strand, Westminster): No. There is no present intention on the part of the Government to do so.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to an Order which stands in his name for the appointment of an additional Judge to the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, Whether it is the intention of the Government to deal with it to-night?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Yes; unless there is a strong objection to its being proceeded with. It was represented that there was urgent necessity for additional strength.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Am I wrong in supposing that this is the first notice which the House has had of the intention of the Government in the matter? The House, up to the present time, has had no information as to the intention of the Government to appoint an additional Judge, imposing a further burden of £5,000 a-year.

Mr. W. H. SMITH replied that the Notice was put on the Paper on Tuesday last. Undoubtedly, there would be an additional charge on the Consolidated Fund.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman wish the House to decide absolutely to-night as to this additional appointment?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I stated that I would not press the matter if there was any strong objection.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

In reply to Mr. Firth (Dundee),

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, he apprehended that the Royal Commission of Inquiry with reference to the Metropolitan Board of Works would retrospectively include everything from the foundation of the Board.

MR. DILLON AND SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol a Question in reference to a speech which he is reported to have made in the East of London last night. He is reported to have used these words—

> "Our opponents may be loyal subjects of the Queen, but it is difficult for us to understand how that loyalty is compatible with intimate association with men who—as I myself heard the other night in the House of Commons—make it a grievance that Her Majesty's soldiers should beguile a tedious march by singing 'God save the Queen.'"

I wish, in the first place, to ask whether that is a correct report of his speech?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir.

Mr. DILLON: Under those circumstances, I must claim the right to address a personal explanation to the House, as I presume the charge is levelled against myself.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH assented.

Mr. DILLON: I regret to be obliged, Sir, to say that I consider it to be a very gross misrepresentation. I wish to direct the attention of the House to what the nature of the charge is. It is perfectly specific. It charges me with having made it a matter of grievance that the soldiers of the Queen should beguile a tedious march by singing "God save the Queen." What are the circumstances of which I complain? To begin with, there was no tedious march. The soldiers of the Queen were brought into Ennis on the occasion of a Nationalist demonstration of a very advanced character. Into the merits of the demonstration it is not necessary for me to enter. They were brought to the town for the purpose of maintaining the peace of the town if the peace was disturbed; and as usual, upon such occasions, they were confined to the barracks while the demonstration was going on. I now come to what I complain of. The soldiers, instead of being confined to the barrack until the crowds had dispersed after the demonstration was over (as is usual on occasions of the kind) were marched out of the barracks while the streets were thronged by thousands of persons who were returning from the demonstration. They were marched against these thronging thousands, at the imminent danger of a collision; and while the marching was going on they sang "God save the Queen" and "Rule Britannia," and they were headed by the Resident Magistrate, who might have to sit on the Bench as Judge afterwards, who is I am informed, specially appointed to sit and adjudicate in the district. I leave it to this House, and think it is eminently a case for personal explanation, as to whether it is right for a right hon. Gentleman to so outrageously misrepresent the action of a fellow Member of this House for political purposes, and I shall merely conclude by placing the two statements side by side. The statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol is that I complained of Her Majesty's soldiers beguiling a weary march by singing "God save the Queen." Well, I complain of four or five things, which I shall now repeat—There was no weary march in the question at all. I complain of the soldiers being turned out of the barracks before the crowd had left the town, which they were doing peaceably. I complain of those soldiers being marched through an excited crowd when there was not a shadow of disturbance, and when they ought to have been kept in barracks; and I complain of their singing songs on that march, a course which was never pursued by soldiers in that district before, although they have been frequently brought in for a similar purpose; and, finally, I complain that a man who might be, if any riot occurred, sitting on the Bench, returning at the head of those soldiers, in the face of the people, singing "Rule Britannia." It is not a question of whether it is a right or wrong. The question is whether the right hon. Gentleman stated what was true or not; and I have now told you what I complained of, and I leave it to the House to judge whether or not that was a fair and honest representation.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I will simply say that the hon. Member has not had the courtesy to give me private Notice of his intention to bring this matter forward, and therefore I have not been able to refer to the answer given by my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) to the Question asked by the hon. Member the other night. I am, like the hon. Member, quite content to leave the matter to the judgment of the House—who know what the Question and Answer were. It is my impression that the effect of the Question and Answer is precisely what I represented.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — SALARIES OF DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, To inform the House when the Government proposed to introduce the Bill to legalize the payment of salaries to Divisional Magistrates in Ireland?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): It will depend very much on the course of Public Business; but I hope the Bill will be brought in shortly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

[BILL 164.] THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read (*Queen's Consent*, and Prince of Wales' *Consent* as Duke of Cornwall, *signified*).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. DODDS (Stockton) said, that his attention had been called that morning to the provision contained in Clause 5 as to the difficulty which would arise owing to the shortness of time allowed to trustees under the Bill for procuring the assent of their *cestui que* trusts. It must be remembered that trustees were under the necessity of procuring the assent of all persons interested in the trust fund, and a great number of them might, at this season of the year, be in different parts of the world, so that their assent could not be procured in the course of a few days. Then, again, when the assent of the Judge was required before a trustee could act, the difficulty was almost greater. He assumed that it was intended to obtain the Royal Assent to the Bill on Tuesday next. He would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that on the same day the Courts would rise for the Easter Vacation, and not sit again till the 12th of April. In many cases, he apprehended that the Vacation Judge would hardly be the proper person to consider applications of this kind. Where the estate was being administered in the Court of Chancery, he apprehended that it would be necessary to apply to the Judge to whose Court the particular estate was attached. There was no chance of the application being made before the 1st of April, and if all these cases were to be left to the Vacation Judge, it was simply impossible for him to consider the numerous cases that would be brought before him. Under those circumstances, and expressing his regret that he had not been able to direct attention to the point earlier, he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able, if not in that House, in "another place" to grant some extension of time within which trustees might signify their assent to the scheme, or failing to do so, be bound by the provisions of the Act. The question was one of vital importance to trustees generally, and for their sake he thought there ought to be some extension of time before this provision became law.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he rose to move the re-committal of the Bill, with a view to insert the following new Clause relating to the re-investment of trust funds:—

> "Any trust funds now invested in New Three Pounds per Cent Stock, Consolidated Three Pounds per Cent Stock, or Reduced Three Pounds per Cent Stock may, instead of being converted under this Act, unless it is specially prohibited by the constitution or terms of the trust, be reinvested by the trustees thereof in the purchase of—

"(1.) Debenture stock of Railway Companies in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament;

"(2.) Preference guaranteed lien annuity or rent-charge stock, the dividend on which is not contingent on the profits of the year of such Railway Companies in Great Britain as have paid a dividend on their ordinary stock for ten years immediately preceding the date of investment;

"(3.) Stock or annuities issued by any Municipal Corporation of Great Britain, which annuities or the interest or dividend upon which stock are secured upon rates or taxes levied by such Municipal Corporation under the authority of any Act of Parliament;

"(4.) Stocks or other public funds of the government of any colony of the United Kingdom approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, and also bonds or documents of debt of any such government approved as aforesaid, provided such stocks, bonds, or others are not payable to bearer."

He wished to call the attention of the House shortly to a somewhat important point in regard to which he asked to extend the power of investment. Only yesterday the Government had assented to an extension in this direction by providing that trust funds might be invested as certain funds under the control of the Court of Chancery were allowed to be invested. There was a general feeling that a further privilege should be extended to trust funds dealt with by the Bill. He, therefore, asked the House to re-commit the Bill for the purpose of introducing a clause extending the power of investment to the Debenture Stock of Railway Companies in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament, which had paid a dividend on their ordinary Stock for 10 years immediately preceding the date of investment; upon the Stock or annuities issued by municipal corporations and colonial Stocks or other public funds approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice. He would point out that the concession made yesterday was really a very small extension. The Court of Chancery allowed trustees to invest, besides the ordinary Three per Cent Government Stock, in India Four per Cents, in Metropolitan Board of Works Stocks, and on mortgage on real securities. With regard to real securities, the extension of the power of trustees in regard to investment was very trifling, because, in consequence of the depression in the value of land, no trustee was likely to invest funds under his control in real property. Therefore real securities must be put aside as an investment. Then, with regard to India Four per Cents he believed there was a sum of £50,000,000 or £60,000,000 in which trustees could invest. He now asked the House to accept his proposition, because a precedent had already been established for it some years ago. What he asked the Government to do in this case was already the law in Scotland in reference to trust funds. In the year 1884, an Act was passed providing for the investment of trust funds in Scotland which gave to trustees in Scotland the identical power for which he now asked. He did not think the House would say the Scotch people were not prudent in the matter of investment, and if they were contented to have a power of this kind, and to use it constantly, it was quite evident that it had been found to work effectually. Therefore, there would be no danger in introducing the same provision with regard to trust funds in this country. All that he asked was that the power already given to trustees should be extended to other classes of security—such as Preference and Debenture Stocks of Railway Companies. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to them in introducing the Bill as having increased very much in value, and no one could doubt that they were a first-class security. He only asked that such Preferential Stocks should be available as had paid a dividend on their Ordinary Stock for 10 years preceding the date of investment. In the first place, he asked for the inclusion of the Corporation Stocks of the various municipal towns in the Kingdom. He thought it would be conceded that these were as safe an investment as the Metropolitan Board of Works Stock. That was an investment already approved of by the Court of Chancery. He would ask the House how it could be said that the Corporation Stocks of the various towns of the country and the equally valuable Stock created by the Metropolitan Board of Works were not ample security for the investment of trust funds? Everybody knew that the Corporation Stocks of such towns as Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester were a most valuable security, and he asked why the principle which had already been adopted in regard to the Metropolitan Board of Works should not be extended to the Stocks of these various Corporations? In the next place, he proposed colonial securities as another branch of investment which had operated well in Scotland. Trustees at present might invest in one branch of Colonial Stock—namely, the India Four per Cents, and he failed to see why they should not be able to invest in the New South Wales Three-and-a-Half per Cents, as well as in the India Four per Cents. Nevertheless, trustees were permitted to invest trust funds in Indian Stock, while they were not permitted to invest in the Stock of New South Wales and other Colonies. The clause he had drawn up contained a provision that the Court of Chancery should make an order as to which of the Colonial Stocks trust funds might be invested in. He thought the proposal was a very reasonable one, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would thoroughly understand that he had no desire to interfere with the success of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, nor did he believe that his present proposal would militate in any way against it. He did not think that it would affect the financial scheme of the right hon. Gentleman in any degree whatever; but inasmuch as the scheme would have the effect of necessarily cutting down small incomes, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to open the door to other securities, by means of which trustees would be enabled to get a dividend equivalent to 3 per cent. If that were not done, and it was not suggested that they would affect the success of the financial scheme, the impression would get abroad that the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to convert the Government Stocks into Consols, and to compel trustees to invest in them. Under these circumstances, he asked the House to allow the Bill to be re-committed for the purpose of introducing the clause of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of a New Clause."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he regretted that the Government could not accept the proposal of the hon. and learned Member. It appeared to him that the hon. and learned Member desired to substitute, for the Consols in which parents and testators had desired to invest, a variety of other securities, although it was the evident intention of such testators to bind up their money tightly in Government securities and not allow them to be invested either in Colonial Bonds, or any other securities. The Government had gone as far as it could by providing yesterday that a certain limited amount of Stock sanctioned by the Court of Chancery might take the place of Consols, and every person who chose could, by re-investment in those funds, get 3 per cent, because the Stocks in question would give them 3 per cent. But the hon. and learned Member went beyond that, and proposed to include Stocks which gave more than 3 per cent, and also gave power to Trustees to choose their investments. Whether that was a right or wrong principle, it ought to be looked at apart from the present Bill; and the question whether the investments authorized by the Court of Chancery ought to be widened or not could not come within the scope of that measure. He would illustrate that point. The hon. and learned Member seemed to suggest that the Court of Chancery should determine what kind of Colonial Stock might be bought in place of Preference Stock. He could hardly imagine the Court of Chancery sitting down to inquire into the condition of the Colonies in order to decide which of the Colonial Stocks should be sanctioned and which should not. There would probably be a jealousy on the part of the Colonies that were left out. Again, there were such cases as extravagant Colonies piling up debt very fast; and he did not think that the House would desire to substitute any cases where the testator or the parent deliberately wished to leave tied up in Government securities investments of the class included in the proposals of the hon. and learned Member. The Government had gone as far as they thought the case allowed. They had admitted such securities as had been sanctioned hitherto; but they could not, by an incidental clause in the Bill, re-open or sanction a principle of far wider application—namely, that of putting Colonial and other Stocks precisely in the same position as the Stocks of this country. In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), he thought the hon. Member had not noticed Sub-section 3 of Clause 9, which provided that investment in various Stocks sanctioned by the Court of Chancery should not be deemed a change of investment. He would engage himself as far as this—in any exceptional case where there was a difficulty in obtaining the sanction of all the Trustees, no attempt would be made to take any advantage of any delay, official or otherwise, on the part of any owner so as to exclude him from the benefits of the Act. The Bill, however, had been varied, and he thought the hon. Member would find that his objection had disappeared.

Sir HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he could not understand why the Government declined to accept the suggestion that securities sanctioned by the Court of Chancery should be available for the investment of Trust Funds. He felt the force of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the proposition to invest in a variety of securities; and perhaps it would not be right to allow a Trustee to select the kind of security in which he would invest. But he was not asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to do anything of a speculative or experimental nature; but to follow legislation which had already been sanctioned by the House. He failed to see why the Government could not, consistently with what they did yesterday, extend slightly the clause of the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Cozens-Hardy). When the Settled Lands Act was passed in 1882 a course was taken which he thought might with justice be followed now, seeing that it affected the matter they were now discussing. It was determined by that Act that on land being sold the money might be invested on Government securities, or on other securities which the Act described. By that Act the Legislature allowed the money of a testator to be invested in land, and set forth what was to be done with the profits derived from such land. Among the securities sanctioned was the purchase of the Stock of any Railway Company which had for 10 years before the date of investment paid a dividend on its ordinary stock and shares. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) asked the House to continue in this instance what was, in reality, a perfectly safe piece of legislation; and the reason they were asked to do so was that the step taken by the Government would not secure 3 per cent from investments in Consols. He would remind the Government that they were not really asked to interfere with any principle beyond that which was interfered with yesterday. They were only asked to extend the clause, so as to enable the interest upon invested Trust Funds to be increased from 2½ to 3 per cent, but no investment would be allowed to take place except with the sanction of the Court of Chancery. The Debenture Stock of a Railway Company which had paid dividends on their ordinary Stock and shares for 10 years must be a safe investment. He did not approach the question in any spirit of hostility towards the Government; nor did he know whether it would be better to make an appeal to the Government in "another place," or to take the matter in hand now. He would advise his hon. and learned Friend not to press the Government now; but to give them an opportunity of considering the matter. But if that course was not taken, and the Motion was pressed to a Division, he should certainly support his hon. and learned Friend.

Mr. W. BECKETT (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw) said, that, for his own part, he quite agreed with the order embodied in the words of the Amendment; but he did not agree with the words of the Preamble—

> "Unless it is specially prohibited by the constitution or terms of the trust."

He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accept the suggestion made from the Benches opposite. He had received a considerable number of letters from various persons occupying the position of Trustees who complained of the limited range of investments; and he thought it was expedient that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should enlarge the powers of investment under the sanction of the Court of Chancery.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that it was only by the indulgence of the House that he could speak again. He would earnestly entreat the House to pause before accepting the principle laid down by his right hon. and learned Friend opposite (Sir Henry James). The House must not only look at the narrow point, important as it was, of raising the income of a certain special class. [Sir HENRY JAMES: Maintaining.] It meant raising the income from the amount which would be derived from Consols. There was a much greater principle involved. The suggestion and the Amendment came to this—that new investments and other securities, such as Railway Debentures, were to be placed on the same footing as Government Stock. A precedent had been quoted to show that the concession had already been made, and that railway securities were looked upon as being as sound as land. This was not a question which could be dealt with in a hurry, involving, as it did, the establishment of the principle that Government securities were to be displaced from the position which they had held hitherto, of being confined to a small select number of securities sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, and that a much broader range should be given to investments. The proposal, if adopted, would really strike a blow on what he might call the credit of the State. He would not say it was a matter that ought not to be allowed; but he thought it ought not to be done until it had received the fullest consideration. He suggested that the question should be raised upon Lord Herschell's Bill with regard to the power of trustees. When that Bill came before the House the matter might be thoroughly discussed; but it could not be conveniently dealt with on the present occasion. What he wished to press upon the House was that in attempting to deal with a certain limited number of cases they were really introducing a new principle into the finances of the State, which might be fraught with considerable danger. He was sure that his right hon. Friend opposite would be aware of the force of this objection; because when once they admitted a security, and the security was found to be unsatisfactory, it would be extremely difficult to go back. He had been treated with such singular courtesy and consideration during the whole of the debates on this Bill, and he had found such a spirit of co-operation in all parts of the House, that he was most reluctant to establish a point of difference with any hon. or right hon. Gentleman; but acting as guardian of the public purse, he could not depart from the principle to which he attached so much force.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, the reason given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for resisting the Amendment was that it was undesirable to raise such a broad principle, as this appeared to be, on the last stage of the Bill in that House. He (Mr. Fowler) would, however, point out that the question was very fully discussed before a very strong Select Committee, presided over by Lord Cross, to consider Lord Cairns' Settled Land Act. The principle was then settled that Trustees selling settled land should have power to invest not only in Consols, Government securities, and Court of Chancery, but on the security of bonds, mortgages, or Debentures of Railway Companies which had paid dividends on their ordinary Stock for 10 years. Therefore, the principle involved in the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn had already been settled by the House—namely, that Trustees should have power to invest not only in Government securities, but in Railway Debentures. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the Lord Chancellor and their Legal Advisers, would reconsider the matter, with a view of ascertaining whether, with due regard to the safety of the State, the concession now asked might not be made? He would not ask the right hon. Gentleman to deal with the matter at once; but simply to promise that it should be dealt with in "another place."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he wished to remind the House of the way in which the question arose—the attention of the Government had been prominently called to the matter; and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) not only by representations made inside the House, but by representations made by the general public. The matter had, therefore, been considered; and he hoped and trusted that something might be done in general legislation, if not in connection with the present Bill. They had already agreed to include those securities in which the Court of Chancery allowed trust money to be invested; but they did not consider that that embraced the larger question which was now raised—namely, securities upon which a high rate of interest was obtained. He trusted that those who were interested in the matter would be satisfied with the assurance he had given. All he could say was that the Government were exceedingly anxious that Trustees should be empowered to invest in other securities, provided that it was consistent with the safe security of the trusts committed to their charge.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, the hon. and learned Attorney General had, he thought, put the matter on the safest footing. He was sorry to say that he was Trustee for so many people that nothing would personally suit him better than some proposal like the present; but, in his opinion, it would be altogether opposed to sound principle. But he was obliged to differ from his right hon. and learned Friend who sat near him. He was afraid that if they gave to Railway Debentures this special character of being on a par with Government securities, it would be impossible to exclude other securities, just as safe; and, even as to railways, looking through the list of securities, it would be found that there were 50 or 60 which would be admitted under this scheme. He quite agreed with the hon. and learned Attorney General and his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the matter was a proper one to consider in connection with the Bill which was coming down from "another place;" but he thought it would be dangerous to do anything now in the direction proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he had listened with great pleasure to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Childers); and he hoped the Government would adhere to the course they had marked out for themselves. It was all very well to speak of Railway Debentures; and it might be desirable, when an individual was investing considerable sums of money every year, that he should be able to invest in ordinary Railway Stock; but he did hope that the House would not sanction the proposal of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Anderson), and place these large and miscellaneous securities in the same position as Consols.

Sir HENRY JAMES was understood to ask what course the Government would take when the Bill now before "another place" came down? Would the Government give facilities for its full consideration?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, it was a Bill in which considerable interest was taken; and he thought it desirable that it should receive the best consideration. Ample opportunities would be afforded for discussing what securities should be authorized; and the list should be examined, with a view of ascertaining whether those which were now sanctioned could be increased with safety. He hoped that his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) would not be disposed to press the Amendment to a Division. He was unable so far to compromise the present position of the Government as to hold out any hope, though, speaking for himself, he would be prepared to place Railway Debentures in the same position as Government securities. He quite admitted that a somewhat extended area might be allowed for investments. No doubt, there would be ample facilities for considering the matter hereafter; but he could not go beyond that.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he hoped the House would permit him to say one word, although he had not heard the whole of the debate. The question of enlarging the power of Trustees was one which undoubtedly deserved consideration, and might be followed up by some practical result; but he demurred to such an enlargement of the Bill as was now proposed. The Bill was a measure to enable the Government to pay off certain holders of Stock, and the holders of the New Three per Cents were entitled to be paid off if they liked. There was no compulsion; but, as a matter of course, they would, if paid off, have their money to invest as they might or could. The holders of any of the Government Stock would be entitled under the Bill either to be paid off, or to remain as they were. That was a transaction which was complete in itself, and it would only embarrass the transaction to give power to invest in other securities. The object of the Bill was clear, and it would be bad policy to go beyond it.

Mr. SPEAKER inquired whether the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn wished to withdraw the Amendment?

Mr. ANDERSON said, he trusted that he might be allowed to say a word. He had given Notice of the Amendment some time ago, and it had been on the Notice Paper for several days; but owing to the Forms of the House he had not been able to bring it on. Therefore, it could not be said that he had taken the Government by surprise; and he should have been prepared to withdraw the Amendment if some assurance had been given that the principle involved in the Amendment would be accepted. He had entirely failed to hear anything of the kind from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, therefore, he must go to a Division.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put.

Bill read the third time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill do pass."

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary Jackson, verbal Amendments made.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, that he objected to the course the Government were taking. Amendments had been moved which were alleged to be purely verbal, but of which the House had no means of judging. Instead of taking that course on a Bill of so momentous a character, the Government ought to have re-committed the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: I read the Amendments to the House. I understand this to be a merely verbal Amendment transposing the words and leaving the sense precisely as before.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, he would explain that a mere transposition of words had been effected in the clause accepted yesterday. He was exceedingly sorry to have to move the Amendment at so late a stage; but it could not be avoided.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *passed.*

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.—[Bill 132.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he took no credit to the Government for bringing this measure before the House, as they had enjoyed the advantage of the labours of other men and of previous Governments in previous years. The Bill proposed that prisoners and their wives should be competent but not compellable witnesses; that a man or his wife might give evidence on the man's behalf, but could not be forced to do so. There were, however, certain restrictions in the Bill as to the cross-examination of prisoners. The first great reason for the Bill was that during the last 20 years some 10 or 15 new offences had been created, with regard to which, almost without exception, a prisoner or his wife could give evidence. This was so, for instance, in the Explosives Acts, the Acts relating to conspiracy, the Food and Drugs Acts, the Merchant Shipping Acts—as to sending unseaworthy ships to sea—and notably in the case of the Criminal Law Amendment Act passed in 1885. The result was that the law was in a most anomalous condition. There was a number of offences in regard to which a prisoner could give evidence, and a number of kindred offences in which he could not give evidence. He had been furnished by members of both branches of the Legal Profession with extraordinary instances of the unjust operation of the present Law of Evidence. There was a prosecution at the Old Bailey, and two prisoners were indicted. It was desirable to prove their presence in another place at the time. One prisoner was married, and the other kept a mistress, and the latter was allowed to give the evidence which the lawful wife was debarred from giving. A man could be examined as to whether he had forged a trade mark; but he could not be examined on the charge of forging a cheque. Under the Criminal Law Amendment Act a man was permitted to be a witness, and might prove his own innocence; but if charged with precisely analogous offences coming under the pre-existing law his mouth would be closed. It might be asked whether the changes already made in the direction of the Bill had proved to be satisfactory. He had communicated with a number of the Judges to ascertain their opinion on the question whether the new law on this subject worked well. They had many years' experience of it, and during the last three years hundreds of cases had occurred under the Criminal Law Amendment Act; and the unanimous testimony of both Bench and Bar was that it had the effect of allowing innocent men in several instances to get off, and causing guilty men to be convicted. He could, for instance, give several cases in which the evidence of children under the Act just referred to could only be rebutted by the statement of the man charged; and it had been on his statement, and the way in which he had given evidence, that an acquittal had been obtained, which could not otherwise have been obtained. All would admit that the first object to be attained was that the innocent should not suffer; and that it would be better for several guilty persons to escape than that one innocent man should be convicted. Mr. Justice Stephen had expressed himself strongly on the absurd state of a law by which a man charged with personating a voter could be examined, but not a man charged with personation and attempt to defraud; and a man could be examined with respect to the sending of an unseaworthy ship to sea, but not on a charge of manslaughter by negligence in so doing. But the Parliamentary history of the question was enough to justify the Bill. Efforts had been made for more than 20 years to change the law in this direction. The first Bill on the question was brought forward by two Irish Members—and he commended this fact to hon. Members below the Gangway—Mr. Scully and Mr. MacMahon. From that time to 1878 constant attempts of the same kind were made, and in 1879 the Report of the Criminal Law Commission was published. In 1883, before the Grand Committee on Law, the matter was fully investigated, with the result that a Bill was introduced in 1884 by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), and Lord Herschell, the then Solicitor General. On the lines of that Bill the present measure proceeded. The Bill had passed the House of Lords three or four times; and he would remind those who had studied the speeches of the great lawyers in the past of the unanimity there had always been amongst them on this question. He believed this Bill had the assent of the lawyers, and of every hon. Member who had considered the question from a practical point of view. No one, he thought, could deny that there was an urgent demand for this Bill. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) was recently defending a man who was indicted for shooting another under very curious circumstances. On that occasion his hon. and learned Friend expressed his hope that the present Bill might become law; and Mr. Justice Stephen, concurring in this view, urged his hon. and learned Friend to do what he could to press forward this much-needed change in the law. The proposals he had submitted would tend to elicit the truth, would conduce to the ends of justice, would lead to innocent men being acquitted, and would bring out the truth in the case of guilty men. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, that this was not the first time that this Bill had been before the House, and that he had expressed the opinion, formed after considerable thought and experience, in favour of it. There were two considerations which made it perfectly clear that the law could not be allowed to remain as it now was. The first of these was that the law as it now stood was utterly inconsistent, inasmuch as in one set of cases the person accused was allowed to give evidence on his own behalf, and another set in which he was prohibited from doing so. This Bill, also, was justifiable on a very broad and sound principle—that the rule of law which incapacitated an accused person from giving evidence on his own behalf had the effect of excluding the evidence of the person who knew most of the transaction in question. He did not hesitate to say that, upon his present information and judgment, he should be prepared to go even further than this Bill proposed to go, and to make the party accused not only a competent, but in some cases, at least, a compellable witness. He would ask the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) whether he did not think there was, at least, one case in which a prisoner should be a compellable witness? That was the case of four or five persons jointly charged with an offence, against three or four of whom there might be cogent evidence, but as to the fifth there might be some evidence, but not of a cogent kind. As the law now stood, the fifth man might be convicted; but if he were enabled to call the men beside him in the dock, they would be compelled to say that he was not present at the commission of the crime. In the Maamtrasna case, many hon. Members—not only those from Ireland — felt very uneasy in their minds with regard to one of the accused persons who was hanged. He knew that the Solicitor General, the Under Secretary of State for India, and he himself, took great pains to investigate the case; and they all three came to the conclusion that there was strong reason for doubting whether one man who was found guilty of murder with the rest, and suffered for it, was guilty of or took an active part in the crime. Could that man have called his fellow-prisoners and his wife as witnesses, it would, in all probability, have saved him from death. The law ought not to be directed towards the protection of the guilty, or to extend to them even an artificial protection; and he was prepared to go beyond what the Bill proposed in the matter of examining accused persons. There was one point that he should like to ask the Attorney General, whether he thought it necessary to insist upon doing what the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) did not insist upon doing—extend the operation of the Bill to Ireland? In the interest of the Bill itself, which, after all, was a new departure in our judicial system, it would be better to see how it operated in England before extending it to Ireland, where, whether rightly or wrongly, under the existing system, a widespread distrust of the administration of the law was unquestionably felt. He would relate a little incident to illustrate that feeling. During the trials of the dynamitards at the Old Bailey, before Judge Hawkins, a few years ago, a friend of his, a respectable Presbyterian minister, from the North of Ireland, was desirous of hearing the trials, and he (Sir Charles Russell) obtained him a pass to the Court. Subsequently the clergyman called on him at his chambers, and said—

> "I was never more astonished in the whole course of my life! Why, a criminal trial in the Old Bailey is not like what I am accustomed to see in Ireland. The prosecuting counsel and the Judge were most anxious that nothing unfair to the prisoners should be mentioned, while in Ireland it is a scramble on the part of those who represent the Crown to secure a conviction."

He did not wish it to be thought that, in giving this illustration, he intended to infer that the Judges, or others who were entrusted with the administration of the law in Ireland, were intentionally or consciously unfair; but he knew that there was a very considerable feeling against legal administration, which would, he feared, be intensified if the Bill were applied to Ireland.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, that he also was very desirous to see the Bill passed, and would join in the appeal of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster). Everybody who knew anything about the administration of the Criminal Law knew how badly this measure was wanted in the interests of justice and mercy. It was wanted for the purpose of obtaining the exoneration of innocent men, as well as for deciding upon the degrees of guilt, for it affected not only the verdict, but the sentence. They had had experience of the Bill in many directions; and many a man who had been prosecuted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act would now be undergoing penal servitude but for the right which he had to give evidence on his own behalf. If a justly accused prisoner gave his own version of the affair for which he had been arrested, the Judge, from merely hearing his evidence, could form an idea as to how far he was implicated, and might possibly mitigate some of the terribly severe sentences now inflicted. At present the Judge heard but one side of the story of brutality, cruelty, and false conduct. With regard to the inclusion of Ireland, he consented in

1883 to exclude Ireland from its operation, because he believed that it would be well to do so until they had had some experience of its working in this country. After some experience of its working in England, he thought it might be applied to Ireland; but as it was well known that the Irish Representatives were at present strongly opposed to it, he hoped the Government would not insist upon forcing it upon an unwilling people. He might remind the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite of the saying that the greatest enemy to the good was the best.

Mr. WHARTON (York, W. R., Ripon) said, he believed that this Bill, which he hoped would pass into law, was one that would greatly assist in their duty those who had the administration of the Criminal Law, and also secure to those who were wrongly accused of crime greater facility for establishing their innocence. But there were three points to which he wished to refer. First, he read in the Bill that a person charged with an offence might be called as a witness, and, he asked, who was to call the prisoner? Was he to be called by the prosecuting counsel, the defending counsel, or by the Court itself? It seemed to him that on the Committee stage of the Bill it would be wise if some words were inserted more clearly to specify by whom the prisoner might be called. Secondly, with reference to the inquiry before the Grand Jury, the Bill said that the prisoner should not be called before the Grand Jury. He had always felt it to be a very anomalous condition of things that they should have an inquiry involving a charge against a prisoner entirely conducted in his absence; and he now thought that when they were dealing with a Bill of the kind it was worthy of their consideration whether this practice should be retained. His third question was, would the calling of the prisoner, without further evidence on his behalf, entitle the counsel for the prosecution to reply? He could not help thinking, if that were so, that this power of calling the prisoner might become something in the nature of a trap. It might be looked on as a trap if the counsel for the prosecution was to have the right of making a long speech on the statement which an unlearned or ignorant man might make. As he had said, he hoped the Bill would pass, because he believed it would be the means of securing the acquittal of innocent persons; and if it tended to the conviction of the guilty, so much the better.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.), in rising to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, said, he desired to express his acknowledgments for what had fallen from the two hon. and learned Gentlemen (Sir Charles Russell and Sir Henry James) with regard to the application of the Bill to Ireland. If the Bill were to be applied under normal conditions he should offer no opposition to it. At present, however, the power to examine a prisoner and his witnesses as well existed in Ireland, and was frequently used in a manner most detrimental to the interests of the accused. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), however, was wrong as to the grievance complained of in the Maamtrasna case. The grievance was that Myles Joyce was not allowed to have his wife examined in his defence. He wished to know whether this measure, like the Coercion Bill, was going to be forced down the throats of the Irish people? The atmosphere of an Irish Court was totally different from that of an English Court of Justice, inasmuch as in the former every effort was made to insure the conviction of a prisoner. Nothing would do the Irish Judges more good than if they were obliged to spend a few weeks in English Courts. Every Judge in Ireland had been a Crown Prosecutor; and a Judge who had gone through a course of Crown prosecuting in Green Street Court House could scarcely believe any man innocent whom he saw in the dock. One of the best Judges on the Irish Bench was the other day led to charge a jury who were convinced of the innocence of a man, accused on the most flimsy evidence of the brutal murder of a woman, to find him guilty of manslaughter if they would not convict him of murder. He contended that cross-examinations, as they were conducted in Ireland by Crown Counsel, would simply leave the case in a worse position than before. Was it reasonable to suppose that with all the best trained intellect of the Irish Bar against a poor wretched prisoner who did not possess 200 words in the whole of his vocabulary the man would not be broken down in the course of the cross-examination? He (Mr. T. M. Healy) would offer every opposition to this Bill being extended to Ireland. He could imagine it being a good measure under normal circumstances in England; but quite a different condition of things prevailed in Ireland. In England there was no prejudice or bias against a prisoner. It was not the interest of the Crown in England to obtain the conviction of a prisoner; but the Crown Prosecutor in Ireland regarded the conviction of a prisoner much in the same way as the Red Indian regarded the addition of a scalp to his belt, and all the talk of the Bar in Ireland was in that sense. He objected especially to this Bill on account of the character of the Resident Magistrates who would have this power of cross-examination and inquisition. The political spirit was at the root of every prosecution in that country, and convictions had to be obtained at all hazards. Personally, he felt so strongly about the measure that he would treat it, if applied to Ireland, in the same spirit as the Coercion Bill of last year. He would devote his days and nights, as far as the Rules would allow him, doing all in his power to defeat it, and he would ask his Colleagues to meet the Bill in a similar spirit. There was great force in the observation of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, that the Bill should be put in operation in England for a few years first in order to see what rules the Judges laid down regarding it. Let them see whether the prisoner was to be allowed to be asked leading questions by his own counsel; and whether the cross-examination was to be generally *ad rem* to a particular crime, of the character, so to say, of that in the Bravo case. Let them see what the practice would be; and then they would be prepared to consider whether a somewhat similar measure might not be applied to Ireland at a future time. If at the present period they applied the Bill to Ireland they would have a feeling created in the country that they were adopting a Coercion Act in disguise; and the entire mind of the people, and the opinion of those who conducted defences on the popular side, would be that the Bill had been introduced for political purposes. Though a similar law to that proposed existed in foreign countries, there was also at the same time existing the right of appeal. That was a most important matter. And in America, where a prisoner could be called in his own defence, there was an express provision in the Statute of some of the States. He thought he was correct with regard to Massachusetts, at any rate, and he believed, also, with regard to some of the States there was an express provision that if the prisoner abstained from going on the stand—as it was called—and giving evidence, his abstention should not be commented on by the Judge in his Charge to the jury, or by the counsel of the State. The result was a whole series of appeals, the accused having a better chance of justice being done him than in this country. In France the whole machinery of appeal was open to the prisoner. Why, then, did they not bring in a Bill to create a Court of Appeal, instead of bringing forward this insidious measure of piecemeal legislation? He invited working men Members of that House to consider whether there was not some danger in connection with that matter, especially remembering how limited the jury class was, even in this country. In Ireland the case in that respect was far worse. To show the limited class from which special jurors who tried cases in Ireland was drawn, he had obtained a Return which proved that while there were in the County Kerry 20,000 voters, the special jurors did not number 200. There would, under the Bill, be a great chance of the escape of a guilty man, and very little chance for an innocent man. If an ignorant man declined to put himself into competition with learned counsel, he would be taunted with fearing cross-examination. The Bill was another link in the chain of coercion which the Government were weaving in Ireland. He asked English Members not to consider the Amendment which he now begged to move unreasonable. It was—

> "That it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in criminal cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power of cross-examining a prisoner deprived of the protection of a jury."

In the interests of Ireland it was most desirable that the disgraceful crimes which existed, especially in the County of Kerry, should be as speedily as possible detected and punished. He himself should be glad if the local population—seeing that the police were unable to check those crimes—would take the matter into its own hands, and by stringent means put a stop to practices of that kind. It was certainly in no sense of shielding criminals that he deprecated the extension of that Bill to Ireland; but he respectfully asked for the consideration of that Amendment the unbiassed opinion of English Gentlemen, whose minds he would ask to be freed from prejudice in dealing with this matter. The Act would lead to the conviction of the innocent. The clever men who were guilty would escape, while the stupid men who were innocent would be convicted.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners deprived of the protection of a jury,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) said, he thought it was very satisfactory that there had been so much agreement on the part of those who had spoken as to the application of that measure to England and Wales. There had been, so far, no difference of opinion on this point—that it was desirable that the measure should pass with regard to that part of the United Kingdom. He confessed that he was very strongly in favour of the measure; and to his mind it was only astonishing that the present system should have existed so long as it had done. It seemed to him most extraordinary that, for so many years, they should have gone on carefully excluding the evidence of those who knew most about the subject-matter of the case. He was disposed to agree with the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) that it would be desirable either to omit altogether the Proviso to which he had referred, or to modify it to such an extent as to give the power, in certain cases, of compelling the evidence of a prisoner. It would, he thought, be hard, where there was more than one prisoner being tried, if one of the accused was not able to call the other, who might be able to give evidence that would secure his acquittal. He assumed that it was intended to apply the measure to Scotland, and that it did apply; but he should like to ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, respectfully, whether certain modifications would not be necessary, and, perhaps, a new clause required, to render the Bill properly applicable to Scotch criminal procedure? No doubt, the Lord Advocate would give that point his attention. The only other question which remained was whether the Bill should apply to Ireland as well as to England, Scotland, and Wales. If that were a matter which depended only on local considerations, he (Mr. Finlay) should be prepared to act on the opinion which, he understood, was entertained by a great many of the Representatives of Ireland on that point. But, to his mind, that was a matter of general principle; and, speaking for himself, he thought it would be a great mistake if they were to have one law on a matter of that kind for one part of the United Kingdom and another law for another part. The question of what person should be allowed to give evidence was not one to be considered upon local considerations peculiar to Ireland. It was a matter of general principle, and a question on which he thought they ought to be guided by those broad considerations which were applicable to every part of the United Kingdom. He presumed that in Ireland, as in other parts of the Kingdom, it sometimes happened that an innocent man was put on his trial. Was it not desirable that he should be allowed to give his own account of the transaction, and submit that evidence which might secure his acquittal? There might be cases in which the only man who could give evidence necessary to establish his innocence was the prisoner himself; and yet they were told, when it was proposed to apply a measure of that kind to Ireland, that that was coercive legislation. Was that a correct statement? He would call the attention of hon. Members below the Gangway to the fact that the hon.

and learned Member for South Hackney gave one very striking illustration of the evils, as he said, of not allowing prisoners to be called to give evidence. Into the merits of that case he would not enter; but he would remind hon. Members below the Gangway that the Maamtrasna case, selected by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney to illustrate the necessity of such a measure, was a case occurring in Ireland. And yet now it was said that the measure ought not to extend to Ireland. They had heard a good deal from the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) in regard to the spirit in which Irish prosecutions were conducted. He was very sorry to hear what the hon. and learned Member said; but, assuming it to be the case that there was that animus for convictions, he would ask the hon. and learned Member whether it was not all the more reasonable to allow a man on his trial to give the evidence which, it might be, was the only means for securing his acquittal? He was strongly of opinion that it would be a mistake if the Government excluded Ireland from the operation of this measure.

Mr. MILVAIN (Durham) said, he could quite realize that if a man charged with a crime was compelled to give evidence in open Court gross injustice might arise, because it very frequently happened that some prisoners were of that nervous temperament that it was impossible for them to do justice to themselves in the witness-box. It would be still worse for such a person to stand in the witness-box without the protection of counsel to defend him; and he could also imagine that if he went into the box without the protection of counsel and was badgered as he had heard witnesses sometimes badgered by counsel his safety might be jeopardized. For that reason, he should object to the compulsory application of the Bill to all prisoners. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) had referred to the question of the application of the Bill to Ireland, and he had been supported in his remarks by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James). He (Mr. Milvain) confessed that he sympathized with the view that the Bill was not, at the present moment, necessary for the administration of justice in Ireland. He did so, not on account of anything which had been said by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) as to the spirit of the administration of justice in Ireland, nor because he agreed with him in the instance which he quoted of the Judge, who, because the prisoner was not guilty of murder, charged him with manslaughter. Unless the procedure in the Criminal Law in Ireland was very different from the procedure of the same law in England, it would not be within the province of the Judge to charge the prisoner with manslaughter under the circumstances; but it would be in the province of the jury, taking a merciful view of the case, to find a prisoner guilty of manslaughter rather than murder. Nor did he sympathize with the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, because of his threats of obstruction. If this law were necessary for Ireland at the present moment, he should not hesitate for an instant to continue to walk through the Division Lobby again and again, as they had done last year, in order to pass the Bill; but, at the present time, he did not think that the Bill was necessary for the administration of justice in Ireland. He would ask the Government to consider whether, for other reasons than those which had been advanced, the Bill ought to be extended to Ireland? In the first place, they had had an amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland last year; they had this subject then threshed out, and under the Act of last year the prisoner was protected against his evidence taken at the preliminary inquiry being used against him on his trial. If that was done last year, he asked the House whether, if the present Bill were applied to Ireland, it would not constitute an amendment of the Criminal Law (Ireland) Amendment Act as enacted last year? He objected also for this reason. They were told that law and order had become supreme in Ireland. They knew that in Ireland there was jealousy of the administration of the law, rightly or wrongly he did not pretend to say; but, considering that that feeling did exist, he asked the Government to consider whether it was desirable in any sense whatever to increase that feeling by extending to Ireland the provisions of this Bill? The examination of prisoners was a subject which he had watched with considerable interest, and he was glad to say that he agreed with the general principle. He therefore supported this Bill, which would also remove the anomaly which existed at the present time. Several instances had been quoted by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) which showed that there were many cases in which the prisoner might give evidence, and many other cases where he was precluded from so doing. He (Mr. Milvain) approved the principle of the Bill, because it got rid of this anomaly, and in that respect it was a legislative step in the right direction. But there was another reason why he agreed with the principle of the Bill, and that was because it corrected an existing evil. As the law existed at present, when the prisoner went into the witness-box to give evidence, he might be asked if he had been previously convicted of any offence. He could give an instance which occurred in his own hearing of a man who was charged with a crime under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. The man had been previously charged with a similar offence, and had suffered imprisonment; but after he was discharged from gaol he came into some money—a large sum for him, of about £600—and immediately afterwards a second charge was laid against him. Fortunately, he was defended by counsel, who believed he saw that the charge was the result of a conspiracy to extort money, and was fortunate enough in breaking down the case in cross-examination of the first two witnesses; the man was thereupon discharged with the approbation of the Judge. He would ask the House what would have occurred had that man not been defended by counsel? If the case of conspiracy had not been established before the case for the prosecution was concluded, and the man had been permitted to go into the witness-box to give his testimony, his previous conviction would have been put before the Court, and the jury would not have hesitated a single moment in convicting him. He said that the principle, but not the letter, of this Bill corrected that evil. The Bill said that no person examined under this Act should be examined as to previous convictions. But might it not be contended rightly by counsel that this Act did not apply to the Acts under which prisoners might now be examined, and that under the Criminal Law Amendment Act questions as to previous conviction might be put to the prisoner? He suggested, with every deference to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, that a clause should be added to the Bill providing that it should not be lawful for any prisoner to be called and examined as a witness otherwise than in accordance with this Act, and that the clauses of previous Acts relating to this matter should thereby be repealed. Subject to that Amendment he agreed with the principle of the Bill, because he believed its effect would be to render more certain the conviction of the guilty and the acquittal of the innocent.

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) said, the Legal Profession in Scotland entirely approved of the principle of the measure. With reference to the Amendment, there could be no doubt that special reasons required to be given why a measure affecting Criminal Law should be applied to Great Britain and not to Ireland. But he thought the reasons given by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) why the Bill should not be extended to Ireland would appear very satisfactory to the House. The maxim which the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) laid down was a very weighty one—namely, that the Criminal Law of the land should be the same in all parts of the United Kingdom; but coming from his lips it had all the charm of novelty, and must have been a surprise to the House. He (Mr. Crawford) did not, however, make that remark for the sake of fixing upon his hon. and learned Friend the imputation of stating a paradoxical opinion, or following an inconsistent course of action, but in order to point out the reason why this part of the Criminal Law should not be the same in Ireland as in Great Britain was because his hon. and learned Friend and his Friends had succeeded in bringing it about that the main body of the criminal procedure in Ireland was not the same as in the other parts of the Kingdom. He (Mr. Crawford), and those who thought with him, contended that the administration of the

Criminal Law in Ireland partook of the nature of an inquisition; that a prisoner was not safe; that he was not protected or sure of obtaining fair play; that the law was not in itself in conformity with the opinions and the feelings of the people, and, therefore, was not administered in a way which they considered fair and just; and, so long as that state of things continued, he thought the Irish should not be deprived of what they felt to be a real protection. It would be a harsh, arbitrary, unjust, and unwise thing if the opinion of the Irish Members was not allowed to prevail on this question. But his principal object in rising was to express the acknowledgment that the Bill, so far as Scotland and England were concerned, was a welcome improvement of the Criminal Law. The subject was not new to them. It was many years since the Faculty of Advocates, of which he was a member, affirmed the principle of the Bill when it was first brought in by a private Member, and the feeling in favour of it had steadily grown. They had always in Scotland had some experience of the principle of consideration being given to the evidence of a prisoner. When the prisoner was apprehended, he had the opportunity of making a statement; and if he did so, his statement formed a necessary portion of the criminal proceedings. It was true that, technically, it could only be used as evidence against him, and not for him; but its production had hardly ever been refused by the prosecution, and had often been a safeguard of the innocent. Accordingly, their experience had led Scottish lawyers and the Scottish public to the opinion that the extension of the principle would be a beneficial thing. At the same time, there were certain details in which the measure might, with advantage, be better adjusted to the wants of Scotland. He was sure his right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate would give due consideration to them, and that in Committee the necessary corrections would be made.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he found some difficulty in this matter, because he was thoroughly in favour of the Bill as it stood. He opposed the Bill when it was brought in by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) in 1886, because he thought there was not then sufficient protection for ignorant prisoners, especially in cases of poaching offences and trade disputes; and to meet the objection he then raised, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman admitted had some force, and which would then have been dealt with had it been possible at that period of the Session, a clause had been added which protected that class of prisoners. It was because he believed the Bill to be in its present condition an exceedingly valuable one, and one which might be of enormous benefit to prisoners in the country, that he appealed to the Government—he did not know that any kind of appeal could have weight after the appeal made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Durham (Mr. Milvain)—he appealed to the Government in the interest of the Bill itself not to include Ireland in it, and he trusted to give satisfactory reasons in support of that appeal. It was said by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) that the Bill dealt with a general principle, and that it ought, therefore, to apply generally to the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. That would be an effective argument if legislation had always been conducted on that basis; but it had not been. On many matters of general principle they had excepted one or the other country. He always thought that unfortunate; he always thought that of itself gave some colour to the claim that there should be separate Legislatures dealing with the separate countries; but he was bound to say that they had exceptional circumstances here which did justify at present the appeal to exempt Ireland from this Act. He did not quite understand the point urged by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness as to one defendant not having given to him the right to call other defendants included in the same indictment.

Mr. FINLAY said, that he simply endorsed what his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney said upon that point.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, at the present moment the law of England certainly, and he thought the law of the other countries also, was that so long as the whole of the defendants were not given in charge to the jury, any one of the defendants might apply to be tried separately, and might ground his application on the fact that he wanted to call his co-defendants as witnesses, and he had the right to do that, and, as far as his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) knowledge went, the Court would always accede to that request. Therefore, he did not understand the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness. If this Bill were passed in its present form, he understood that a prisoner would have the right to tender himself as a witness, or to tender his wife as a witness, on his behalf, or the prosecution or any co-prisoner would equally have the right to call him as a witness with this reservation, that the prisoner and his wife would have the right to refuse in the event of their thinking it would be right to do so. There was one point raised which he thought would be worthy of very serious consideration when they got into Committee, and that was the point that neither the Judge nor the counsel for the prosecution ought to have the right to comment hostilely upon the abstention of the prisoner from going into the witness-box. The matter ought not to be dealt with as it would be in a civil case. He had reason to remember a case in which three persons were indicted together; one of them applied to be tried separately, and the counsel for the prosecution in that case said he should comment upon the fact, in the event of their not being put in the box, of the other prisoners not being called by the one who would be tried separately. In that case the prisoner put the others in the box, and said nothing to them, except to ask them their names, thus relieving himself from the risk of hostile comment on account of not calling them; but it was not every prisoner tried by himself who had sufficient knowledge of what was in his power to do. A man would not care to render himself open to the unfair position in which he might be placed, and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) thought there ought to be in Committee an addition made to the Bill to the effect that there should not be any hostile comment either by the prosecuting counsel, or by the Judge, or by any advocate for any other prisoner charged upon the fact that the prisoner or his wife had refused to exercise their right of going into the box. It would be a mistake to leave them the right of refusal if the exercise of it was to weigh against them as though it were a matter of guilt. Now, having dealt with that point, and expressed his hope that this Bill might become law for England, Wales, and Scotland, he ventured to say a word upon the appeal made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). As he understood him, the hon. and learned Member agreed with the principle of the Bill. The hon. and learned Member agreed that wives should have the choice of being called, and he agreed that prisoners also should have that choice, if it were not as he alleged—and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) thought with good grounds—that an exceptional state of things existed in Ireland. He would not discuss how that exceptional state of things had originated which would make the examination of prisoners as witnesses absolutely unfair. One of the hon. and learned Gentleman's grounds of objection was that the magistrates before whom the people must often come in the cases he had in mind were magistrates not of the ordinary character, but removable magistrates, tempted to act rather as partizans than as Judges, and as advocates for the prosecution rather than as persons seeking for the truth. There did seem to him to be real and material objection in that, and it was put very fairly to the House by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Durham that if they extended this Bill to Ireland now they would really override what the Government themselves consented to last year having an overwhelming majority at their disposal, when they exempted prisoners from having their examinations brought up against them as evidence in their trial. The objection which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) made to the Bill had been fairly and fully met, and it was because he did not desire that he should be driven into voting, as he must vote, for the Amendment, which he did not like—it was that he should not be driven into voting for an Amendment which, if carried, would be fatal to the whole of the Bill, that he asked the Government to take into consideration the appeal which had no

Party character. It was an appeal made to them from their own side, an appeal made to them by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury, who certainly had this Bill at heart, and who, to his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) knowledge, took great pains with it in previous Sessions when it was in his hands; and it was an appeal which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) made in no antagonism to the Government at all, but because he believed that the Bill might be risked in passing, if the wishes of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford were not acceded to, wishes which were very justly founded upon the way in which justice was administered in Ireland. He was sorry to hear the hon. and learned Member for North Longford say there was prejudice in this country against the poor on trial. He did not think such a prejudice existed; it was true that in some trade disputes, and it was true that in some poaching offences, they did get what he might call a Party administration of justice; but outside such cases, and they were very exceptional, he did not think there was any excuse for saying that the Criminal Law in this country was pressed more harshly against the poor than against the rich, or that it was pressed more harshly against the unpopular man than it was against the popular man. He deemed it right to say that. He could quite understand the hon. and learned Member for North Longford saying what he did, considering his unfortunate experience of the administration—it was hardly fair to call it justice—of the law in his own country. No doubt the hon. and learned Member thought that what obtained in Ireland obtained in England also, but it did not. He would not trouble the House with any further remarks upon the point. He did not quite understand what the hon. and learned Member for Durham meant by the compulsory provisions of the Bill, for there were no compulsory provisions. There was great power of ascertaining the evidence given; but the prisoner was told—and by the clause the hon. and learned Attorney General had inserted, which met entirely the objection he (Mr. Bradlaugh) raised for two years to this Bill—the prisoner was told "you have the right to refuse." It was only needed that there should be in Committee inserted in the Bill some provision that the refusal of a prisoner to give evidence should not be commented upon against him. If that were done he did not see a shadow of unfairness in the Bill at all, and he ventured, in sitting down, to ask the Government to exempt Ireland from the operation of the Bill, which would then pass practically as an unopposed measure. All Members concurred in wishing to make the Bill law, and all would like to see it extended to Ireland when a better state of things came about, and when its administration would not be associated with exceptional legislation which was rightly regarded as coercive.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University) said, that in the few observations which he desired to lay before the House he would confine himself to the duty or expediency of including Ireland within the scope of the measure. There had been absolute unanimity in favour of its principle, and he submitted that its character in connection with the administration of justice and the admissibility of evidence made it *primâ facie* to apply equally to every portion of the United Kingdom. Suppose the Bill, if passed into law, were not to apply to Ireland, how extraordinary the position would be? If a man happened to be accused of a crime in England, everyone was agreed that it would be for his protection, if innocent, that he should be able to give his own version of the story. The same man could not give his version of the story if accused in Ireland. What shadow of excuse could there be for limiting the measure in that way? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) and others urged their appeal to the interest of the Bill. But the question to be considered was the interests of the administration of justice in Ireland. He looked upon this measure as a remedial measure, and, therefore, he thought it should be extended to Ireland. It would be very easy to take hold of this Bill as a convenient peg on which to hang a denunciation of the administration of the law in Ireland. It had been stated to the House that there existed in Ireland a widespread feeling of distrust with reference to the administration of justice in Ireland. It had been also stated that Irish Judges were inclined to lean rather more heavily against an accused person than were English Judges. He did not now intend to enter into a defence of the Irish Judges, but he altogether denied that statement. A certain portion of the administration of justice was now entrusted to what had been called "removable" magistrates; but a certain portion of the law was administered the same way in England.

MR. T. M. HEALY: They have the right of appeal always.

MR. MADDEN: But if there was a small portion of the law administered in this way, were they to legislate for that special portion? It occurred to him that if the arguments of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) were examined they tended to show that there was all the more necessity for the extension of this Bill to Ireland. If Judges were unfair this Bill was all the more wanted, because everyone who had spoken had admitted that the Bill would be a protection to an innocent man who found himself in the dock. If the hon. and learned Member agreed that that was the case, and at the same time argued that the innocent man in Ireland was exposed to peril on account of the unfairness of the Judges, he thought the argument led to the opposite conclusion. If they were going to improve the method of taking evidence under the criminal system, surely they ought to improve it throughout the entire Kingdom, and for the benefit of every class. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford said that—

> "It is inexpedient to make any further changes in Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in criminal cases has been established."

No doubt, the question of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal was a question of the very greatest importance. But what was the force of the argument which had been deduced in favour of the establishment of such a Court? It was that miscarriages of justice might occur in the trial of a case before a jury. But was this Bill a Bill to improve the mode of conducting trials, or was it not? If it was not, what was the meaning of this consensus of opinion in its favour? If it was, how could it be said that the chances of miscarriage were not diminished? In conclusion, he ventured to hope that the House would come to the decision that this measure was an efficient measure, and one which was in favour of a class which, above all others, the House was bound to consider.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he was sorry to have to trouble the House a second time, but as an Amendment had been moved which narrowed the question before the House he wished to make a few further observations. Of course, all would appreciate the fact that the Bill before the House would give an advantage to innocent persons; but it was necessary to look to the circumstances in which that opportunity was given, and practical reasons and difficulties occurred to his mind why he thought that it might be that a different effect would be given to that opportunity in Ireland than would be given in England. He had hoped the Government would have given way to the appeal made by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) and himself, and have excluded Ireland from the operation of the Bill. He would not go into the question of the administration of justice in Ireland, but did not think it was possible to assert that the conduct of criminal cases in Ireland was exactly the same as it was in England. Anyone who had watched the conduct of criminal cases in England would know that no prosecuting counsel ever thought of exercising any ingenuity to secure a conviction. The Judge was always careful that no prosecuting counsel should for a moment exceed the line of his duty. He hoped and believed that was the state of things in Ireland; but he was not quite sure that in some class of cases there would not be an acuter phase of forensic rivalry than would be displayed in this country, so that the efficacious principle might not be the same in Ireland as in England. But then there was the question of a prisoner who did not wish to be called. English prisoners, he was sure, as a rule, would regard this Bill as a beneficent and merciful measure in their favour, and would in most cases wish to be examined on their trial. But they must take Ireland as it was. They must take the opinion in Ireland as it was, and they must take into consideration the opinions of the Representatives of the Irish people as they were. Although he thought they would be teaching the

Irish people wrongly, yet they would teach the Irish people that this was a hostile measure; and if they did that, might it not be that the Irish criminal would take up an attitude of dogged hostility to this measure, and refuse to go into the witness-box? If that should prove to be the case a position would be taken up by the Irish prisoner which would defeat the very object of the Bill. He would remind the Government that those who were united in their efforts to maintain the Imperial Parliament constantly stated that they were willing to listen to the opinions of Irish Members, and, in matters solely affecting Ireland, to give to those opinions their due weight, having regard to their being based on local knowledge. The Bill would only succeed if it were regarded as a beneficent Bill; and if it were regarded as a measure establishing a tyrannical inquisitorial power it would not be a good Bill. He therefore appealed to the Government to accede to the Amendment, and allow the Bill to come into operation in England without further delay. When experience had manifested the beneficial operation of this change in the law, a desire for its extension to Ireland would, no doubt, soon arise in that country.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Edward Clarke) (Plymouth) said, he was very glad that the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had had an opportunity of addressing the House again, and of developing what he called the arguments in favour of this Amendment. The fact that the right hon. Gentleman had made an appeal to the Government in favour of the Amendment was a matter of importance, having regard to the right hon. Gentleman's previous connection with this Bill. His words were entitled to be considered; but they, in effect, amounted to a most amazing argument. The right hon. Gentleman was strongly in favour of the principle of a prisoner being allowed to give evidence in his own defence, yet, though he could point out no distinction in principle between Ireland and England, he now urged the House to withhold this beneficent Bill—to use his own term—from Ireland. His argument was that it ought not to be extended to Ireland, because the Irish Members were against it. If the right hon. Gentleman believed that this change in the Law of Evidence would make the administration of the Criminal Law more fair and just, there was no reason for not extending it to Ireland, save that which was based on the alleged partiality of Irish Judges, which was a ground disavowed by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had appealed to the Government not to extend the Bill to Ireland; but the only real argument that had been adduced in support of such a course was that it would be more easy to pass the Bill if this Amendment were agreed to. That argument had great force with him, for before he entered the House he had pledged himself to do all he could to have the law amended as the Bill proposed to amend it; and he was most anxious to see it placed upon the Statute Book, even if it only extended to England. But this was not the end of the Session, and the House had still plenty of time to deal with this subject; and if it was right to extend the Bill to Ireland the House ought not to be frightened out of doing so by the threats of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he did not think it right that the hon. and learned Gentleman should apply such a term to what he said. He made no threat; he merely expressed his intention of exercising his Constitutional right of opposing the measure.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE said, he should like to know what single word the hon. and learned Member would use to describe the intimation he had given them?

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he would not describe it by any single word, but by several.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE said, the word he had used was the nearest he could think of to describe the intimation of the hon. and learned Member that if the Amendment was not accepted he would devote his days and nights to constructing Amendments.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he never mentioned the word Amendments.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE said, at this period of the Session it would not be just or wise or right to yield to such an intimation as this. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had dealt with what might be styled the "atmosphere" of the Irish Courts. But the worse the atmosphere was, the more essential was it that the prisoner should be allowed the privilege of giving evidence. It was said that an ignorant prisoner would be pounced upon and unfairly cross-examined by experienced Queen's Counsel; but his experience of criminal trials was that if an ignorant witness was unfairly cross-examined the sympathies of the jury were always drawn to him. [An hon. Member: Packed juries.] Well, if the Judges were partial and the juries were packed, no rules of evidence were of much importance. The safeguard afforded by publicity existed in Ireland as in England. The hon. and learned Member for South Hackney had referred to the Maamtrasna case. With regard to that case he (Sir Edward Clarke) had in the past expressed his opinion. He adhered to that opinion, and was quite ready to repeat it at any time. But that case was very curiously introduced by the hon. and learned Member, who argued that if the prisoners could at the Maamtrasna trial have given evidence an innocent man would have been saved, and then the hon. and learned Member went on to argue that this change of the law should not be extended to Ireland. At present there existed absurd anomalies, owing to a man charged under the Criminal Law Amendment Act with an assault on a child being permitted to give evidence, while another man charged with an attempt to commit a still more serious crime could not. These anomalies existed in Ireland as well as in England, and ought to be abolished. He felt very strongly in favour of that portion of the Bill which swept away that barbarous rule which prevented a husband and wife giving evidence for each other. It was amazing that such a rule should have been allowed to continue on the Statute Book until now. The inequity of this rule was strongly brought home to his mind by a case in which he appeared for a prisoner some years ago. The prisoner, a respectable man, who had been 28 years in the employment of the same firm in London, was charged with setting fire to the premises. He was the last person known to leave the premises. He left at 6 o'clock, and the fire occurred at 8 o'clock. He believed the prisoner to be innocent—the man being of the highest character and having no motive for committing the crime. He asked him to account for the interval between 6 and 8 o'clock. The man said he had been making a few purchases at one or two shops, and then went home and helped his wife with the children. The children were too young to be put in the witness-box, and by the existing laws of evidence neither the wife nor the husband could give any evidence. He did not dare to call the persons at whose shops the prisoner had called, for they could only account for half-an-hour of the two hours, and one hour and a-half would have remained unaccounted for. Fortunately the presiding Judge carefully looked into the case, and the man was acquitted. But this case firmly convinced him of the unfairness of not permitting a wife to give evidence on behalf of her husband. There was no real ground for the suggestion that the change which the Bill would effect would injure any innocent prisoner. Hon. Members from Ireland said that prisoners in that country were tried in an atmosphere of adverse prejudice. Well, given an unfair Judge, a jury prejudiced against the prisoner, and a prosecuting counsel inclined to be unfair—given such a state of things, what possible chance would a prisoner have who could not give evidence in his own behalf? By shutting out the evidence of an innocent prisoner, tried before an unfair Judge and a biassed jury, dealing with inferences and hypotheses they would be doing the very thing which must destroy all his chances of proving his innocence. He had known many cases of prisoners who had saved themselves by the statements which they were permitted to make to the jury; and again and again prisoners had asked him, with tears in their eyes, whether they could not give evidence. The present practice was not at all satisfactory. It would be remembered how, at the trial of O'Donnell some four years ago, the counsel for the prisoner claimed the right to state to the Court, as a narrative of facts, the story supplied to him by his client, and how the Judges decided that counsel had no such right. In consequence of that decision the dangerous practice had arisen of allowing a prisoner to make a statement before his counsel's address to the jury. This gave a great advantage to a clever rogue, but if he were liable to cross-examination his cleverness would avail him little. In the witness-box clumsy innocence would succeed in gaining an acquittal from a jury far more certainly than clever roguery. He trusted that the House would persist in its determination to pass the Bill unaltered, and thus to do an act of real and substantial justice to innocent defendants, not only in this country, but in Ireland also.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), powerful as they were, were not directed to the point of the Amendment, but to the defence of the general principles of the Bill. There was no difference of opinion as to the utility of the measure. They were all agreed that to allow prisoners to become witnesses when they wished to do so would be a humane and beneficent change. He was unwilling, for that reason, to make a remark of a political character. But the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) must now perceive that the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite of the principles upon which Ireland ought to be governed were not the views he entertained. He could not agree that all the reasons which existed for the application of the Bill to England must necessarily exist in the case of Ireland also. The hon. and learned Solicitor General said that there was no distinction between the cases. It would be very easy to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman why he did not lay down the same principle in such a matter, for example, as local government. If the principles upon which the demand for the extension of local government was founded were admitted to be beneficent and wise, why not extend their application to Ireland? The hon. and learned Gentleman had not dealt effectively with the argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy)—that the atmosphere of an Irish Court was not supposed by the people of Ireland to be favourable to the prisoner. The argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford proved that there was all the difference in the world between the operation of a measure in Courts like the English Courts and its operation in Courts such as the hon. and learned Member and his Friends believed theirs to be. This was a Bill in favour of the prisoner; but the Government were going to apply it in a country where it would inevitably be regarded—whether rightly or wrongly—as being hostile to the prisoner. The effect of the measure upon Irish opinion would be the very opposite of that which was justly claimed for it in England. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) had argued with great plausibility that the supposition that there was animus in the mind of a Judge against a prisoner was all the more convincing reason why they should give the prisoner the chance of exculpating himself by giving evidence. But it must not be forgotten that if the contention of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford were correct, and if there was animus in the mind of an Irish Judge and a strong animus in the prosecuting counsel, the prisoner under this Bill would be exposed to the risk of a bitterly hostile cross-examination, and enforce on him a very serious disadvantage. It appeared to him (Mr. John Morley) the sheerest pedantry to insist that because this was a wise and desirable change in itself and in this country, they were, therefore, bound to force it upon Ireland against the wishes of her Representatives, and against the opinion of so staunch a partizan of the Government on the Opposition side as the right hon. and learned Member for Bury. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury was free from the suspicion of motive which attached to the Irish Members below the Gangway, and he had shown that he was strongly opposed to the change itself; and on both these grounds his opinion was entitled to the greatest weight. Would the Government insist upon extending the legislation to Ireland against the wish of all the popular Representatives of that country, and against the opinion of a partizan of their own who was most competent to give an opinion upon that subject? He wished to underline the argument of the hon. and learned Member for the City of Durham (Mr. Milvain), which he was surprised the Government did not see the force of. They considered they were engaged on the difficult task of restoring law and order in Ireland. They said they had now got a state of opinion in Ireland much more favourable than it had long been to the maintenance of law and order and respect for the administration of the law. They must admit, therefore, that it was most undesirable politically to arise fresh jealousy by introducing a single element of suspicion or irritation into the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland at a moment like this; and yet they must equally admit that this would be the effect of the provision which, with deplorable tenacity, the Government insisted upon extending to Ireland. For his part, if his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. T. M. Healy) limited his Amendment to the proposal that it was inexpedient to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners, he (Mr. John Morley) would support it with a clear conscience, and with no desire to do anything but to further the passing of the Bill as regards England and Scotland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND) (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he thought they were all agreed that they ought to extend to Ireland, when it was possible, every beneficial measure they gave to England. Therefore, what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) had had to do was to show that in Ireland circumstances were different in some matter relative to the particular issue before the House. The special illustration used was the most astonishing and extraordinary he ever heard; because, while in the matter of local government the circumstances of Ireland were enormously different from those of England, there was great similarity between them in the administration of justice. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had enunciated a proposition which he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) strongly repudiated—namely, that the Bench in Ireland showed a bias against a prisoner, which their brethren in England did not show. Learned gentlemen did not practice before the Courts in both countries; and the impression he had derived from speaking with those who were acquainted with the administration of Criminal Law in both England and Ireland, was that the Irish Judges were as careful as their English brethren to see that everything was urged for the prisoner that could be urged, and that the inclination of justice should always be in favour of the prisoner whenever there was a doubt. What the right hon. Gentleman contended was not so much that the machinery was bad as that public opinion in Ireland was against it. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) ventured to say that public opinion in Ireland—or, for the matter of that, in this country either—did not exist on this subject outside legal circles. If they put this machinery in force, and if the Irish people on seeing how it worked concluded that it worked badly, he would admit that there was something in the plea that public opinion was opposed to it. But at present, what was against it was the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford—not an opinion which he underrated, because he believed that it would materially assist in the passing of the Bill. What they ought to look at in this matter was not the opinion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) or the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, however great ought to be the weight of those opinions in the House. What they had to consider was whether this Bill was an improvement of the machinery of criminal justice, as every human being admitted it to be in England; and no argument had been brought forward to show that it would not be an equal improvement in Ireland. It was surely an unorthodox proposal that because there was a certain amount of uninformed sentiment against the change in the mind of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, they should therefore refuse to innocent men in Ireland the protection they gave to innocent men in England. Whether Irish tribunals were good or bad, it must be in the interests of justice that full evidence should be brought into the light of day with regard to every case that was tried. If there was prejudice against prisoners, and magistrates were unjust Judges, the way to keep them in order was that public opinion should be brought to bear upon their action, so as to compel them to have brought into Court all the evidence which could tell in favour of innocent men. Inasmuch as this Bill was admitted to be one of the most powerful pieces of machinery for effecting that object, he should for that reason, if for no other, do everything he could to bring it into operation for Ireland as well as for England.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) entirely forgot the argument put forward from the Irish Benches. What he (Mr. Dillon) and his hon. Friends contended, and what they believed was, that the atmosphere and the methods adopted in Irish Courts would prevent this machinery being favourable to the prisoner in Ireland, as it would be undoubtedly in England. In that lay the whole essence of the controversy. It was a most important point of the controversy, and so it had been justly and properly dwelt on by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench — namely, that it did not matter so much whether they were right or not in their opinion; the question was whether they were faithfully reflecting the sentiments of the people of Ireland in this matter, and if that were so the argument in favour of omitting Ireland from the Bill was unanswerable. He thought the reception given to the appeal made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was a further and most striking illustration of the uselessness of having Irish Members in the House of Commons at all. What was the good of the Irish Members in the House? He overheard an hon. Gentleman say it would be better if they were not there. [*A Cheer.*] Yes, hon. Gentlemen cheered the idea that they were useless. He asked the Speaker whether this instance was not an extremely apposite illustration of the utter uselessness of Irish Members being in the House of Commons at all? What was the good of the Irish people sending Members to Parliament if the House of Commons refused to believe that they were stating the views of their constituents? They had to-night heard the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) and the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in the most self-satisfied way, proclaim themselves to be better judges of how the Irish people would receive this measure than the Irish Members. That was certainly what the whole of their argument amounted to. Coming to the question of how this Bill would be received in Ireland, he maintained that it was impossible for anyone at all acquainted with the condition of Ireland to doubt that it would be received by the people of that country as a measure directed against prisoners. Let him point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it was an unhappy circumstance in the history and condition of Ireland, that the people of Ireland were obliged to follow the administration of the Criminal Law a great deal more closely than the people of England. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) told the House that there existed no public opinion in Ireland upon this matter. The right hon. Gentleman was entirely mistaken, and he would find that the moment this Bill and its proposals became known to the people, there would be a great outcry against it. Men in Ireland did not know from week to week how soon they might be hauled up before the magistrates, and therefore there existed a much keener and wideawake public opinion on the question of criminal practice than existed in England. This was not a question confined to lawyers, and to those persons now administering the Criminal Law. It was perfectly absurd to suppose that in Ireland there was the same confidence in the impartiality of the Judges and in the fairness and impartiality of prosecuting counsel as in this country. Everybody who was acquainted with the past history of criminal procedure in Ireland knew that the vast majority of prosecuting counsel followed the prisoner like bloodhounds on the track, and they had been over and over again proved to have carried on such proceedings for the conviction of a man, both in the manipulation of evidence and in their conduct in Court, as would simply horrify an English lawyer. The great aim the Irish prosecuting counsel had set before them was, *per fas aut nefas*, to get a conviction. He ventured to say with confidence that if any English lawyer, accustomed to criminal prosecutions in this country, were to attend a Bar Dinner, or a meeting in which there were a number of Crown Prosecutors in Ireland, he would come home horrified at the tone and temper adopted by these men towards prisoners. He (Mr. Dillon) did not accuse any particular individual Crown Prosecutor; but he alleged that it was a common proceeding for these gentlemen to endeavour to get a conviction under any and all circumstances. They knew the history of Mr. Peter O'Brien—they knew what he had done, and he was at the head of the whole criminal prosecuting system in Ireland, and when they were told by hon. and learned and by right hon. Gentleman opposite, that the system proposed by this Bill would have come to the relief of the accused in the Maamtrasna murder case, he would assert his belief that it would in no way have come to the rescue of Myles Joyce. He did not think that Myles Joyce or anyone else would have dared voluntarily to face the cross-examination of a man like Peter O'Brien. He (Mr. Dillon) knew perfectly well the story of the manner in which the evidence in the Maamtrasna case was manipulated by the prosecuting counsel and the prosecuting solicitor before it came into Court. They knew that Mr. Peter O'Brien was in possession of evidence the tendency of which would have been to give the prisoner a chance, and that they deliberately suppressed it. Evidence would have been forthcoming from a certain boy whose testimony might very probably have shaken the opinion of the jury as to the guilt of the prisoner; but the Crown Prosecutor would not allow it to be used, and it was with regard to such men as this—to protect prisoners and give them fairplay — that the Irish Members were asked to assent to the principle of this Bill. He (Mr. Dillon) held that if Myles Joyce had had an opportunity of going into the witness-box and submitting to an inquiry, he never would have dared to avail himself of it so long as Mr. Peter O'Brien was the prosecuting counsel, and there hon. Members would appreciate the difference between England and Ireland. An Englishman, whatever he might be accused of, knew perfectly well that if he got up in Court and told his story simply and fairly, he would not be bullied and browbeaten by the prosecuting counsel, and he knew perfectly well that if he convinced the prosecuting counsel that there was a doubt in the case he would get the benefit of the doubt. But in the mind of the Irish prisoner such a belief did not exist. He (Mr. Dillon) spoke on this subject with a perfect knowledge of the opinion of his fellow-countrymen. It was preposterous for the English Attorney General and Solicitor General, who had probably never put a foot on Irish soil in their lives, and knew nothing about the people of Ireland—it was preposterous for them and the Irish Secretary to tell him that they knew the minds of the Irish peasantry better than the Irish Members did, and that the Irish peasantry would accept this Bill as an emancipating measure. Whatever might be the faults of himself and his Party — whatever might be their sins and ignorances—surely they might be allowed to speak on behalf of the feelings, aye, and the prejudices, too, of the Irish peasantry if they desired. He declared that this measure would not be accepted for a moment as anything but an addition to the coercive system for strengthening the awful machinery of the law in Ireland directed against the peasantry. The ordinary Irish peasant, when he felt he was innocent, would not dare to go into the witness-box. He certainly would not do so as long as the present Irish Attorney General was in Office. The reputation of that Gentleman in Ireland was such that anyone who had not the greatest confidence in his own ability would not dare to face him. And what would be the result on the Court if the accused person, having this dread in his mind, were to refuse to give evidence on his own behalf? Mr. Peter O'Brien would say—"What more evidence do you want?—this man refuses to go into the box, and is, therefore, manifestly guilty." That argument would tell enormously with a jury carefully packed, as juries were packed in Ireland. He (Mr. Dillon) knew very well how this thing would operate. It would operate in the direction of increasing enormously the distrust of these poor people in Ireland in the administration of the law, and it would operate to put into the hands of the Crown Counsel a still wider discretion than that they had used latterly, and which they had used with most fatal effect on the minds of the Irish people. Let him bring to the notice of hon. Members who thought that he (Mr. Dillon) and his Friends were exaggerating when they stated that the

Crown Counsel in Ireland were not impartial and honest in the discharge of their duty, the facts of a recent murder trial in Wicklow—and when he detailed these facts he did not believe there was a man in the House who would not be thoroughly convinced that the individual accused in this trial could not for a moment believe in the just spirit either of the prosecuting counsel or of the Judge. What happened? The Clare peasants who were accused of the murder of the policeman Whelehan under the Crimes Act were brought from Clare to Wicklow, and when in Wicklow they were brought before a special panel, and the jury was packed upon that special panel. The men were convicted. The Crown strained every nerve to get a conviction; and he was bound to say that the feelings of these men must have been something frightful when they saw the jury which was selected to try them. Well, immediately after that trial, there came on the trial of the murderer of Kinsella, and the Crown Counsel, having the power to do so, placed this man on trial before his own employers—that was to say, the owners of the property forming the scene of the murder. They did not exercise the power they exercised in the other case. No opposition was offered on the part of the Crown Counsel when Kinsella's murderer applied for a change of panel from a common to a special jury. When the accused was brought with the consent and connivance of the Crown before a jury of Wicklow landlords, the Crown Counsel refused to challenge any jurymen, and allowed the first men whose names had been called to be put on the panel. They had allowed the prisoner 30 challenges, but in the other case they had themselves used 30 challenges against the Clare men in order to pack the jury. And then, in open Court, the whole demeanour of the Crown Prosecutor was friendly to the murderer of Kinsella, and he did not take the trouble to conceal, after the trial was over, that he was rejoiced at the acquittal. Now, in the face of these trials, which had occurred within the last six months or so, were the Irish Members to be told that there was no ground for the belief of the Irish peasant when he might happen to be charged with offences to be put upon his trial, that the atmosphere of the Court was not unimpartial? It was in the face of these facts that he said to hon. Members opposite that they must not be surprised if the Irish Members did not give the same reception to a measure of this character which the English Members and the English people did. But this was not the whole case; it was only one branch of it. He had noticed that the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Solicitor General for Ireland had passed very lightly over the case of the Resident Magistrates. The Solicitor General for England, with his usual glibness of argument, said that if they were improving one branch of criminal administration for one part of the United Kingdom they were improving it for all. He (Mr. Dillon) would ask the House to consider the principles laid down by Resident Magistrates in Ireland. Only the other day, in a certain case which came before one of these Resident Magistrates, the magistrate said—

> "These men are accused of holding a certain meeting, and there is a presumption—a general belief—that the meeting was held, and they, if they can, have to give proof that it was not held,"

and thereupon he sentenced them to terms of imprisonment with hard labour. This Resident Magistrate had actually laid the burden of proving that a meeting was not held upon the prisoners. The police could not give evidence that a meeting was held, but only of the existence of a presumption that it was held. It must be remembered also that there was this difference between law in England and in Ireland in these cases—namely, that there was no appeal in Ireland when sentences were short sentences. Was it that the Government were going to introduce a system with regard to short sentences in which the Crown Prosecutors were going to be allowed to call on every prisoner to go into the witness-box and prove his innocence, and submit to cross-examination before a hostile counsel and hostile magistrates—gentlemen who did not conceal their ferocious hostility, and who had actually been known to give a physical expression to that hostility the moment after they had left the Bench. The magistrates in Ireland never were impartial, they were always strongly opposed to prisoners, and he (Mr. Dillon) maintained that if this new law were introduced into Ireland the procedure of the Resident Magistrates would be this. To every man who came into Court accused of a crime they would say "Are you going to be examined? If you are not, you are guilty." That would be a very serious matter, and he (Mr. Dillon) declared that he did not believe that he was exaggerating in the slightest degree what would be the result of this measure in a Magistrate's Court. The Irish Members were told that they did not give a single argument why there was any difference in Ireland from the position of affairs in England with regard to these laws. He would ask, what use was it for them to give any arguments? For all practical purposes the Irish Members on these benches might just as well sit as dumb logs. When they gave arguments they were sneered at, and when they gave the opinions of their constituents they were told by English officials that they knew more about these things than the Representatives of the Irish people themselves did. In conclusion, he would ask whether any hon. Member would explain on what ground the Government wanted to retain Irish Members at Westminster instead of allowing them to go away and manage their own affairs at home?

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he must join in the appeal which had been made to the Attorney General for England. He was surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman should persist in joining in this Bill two countries so differently situated as England and Ireland—countries to which the same arguments did not in any degree apply. Every consideration which induced them to support this measure for Scotland and England compelled them to refuse their assent to it for Ireland. If the Attorney General were actuated by a single desire to benefit the people of England, he would, without the slightest hesitation, cut Ireland out of the Bill. But the hon. and learned Gentleman reminded him (Mr. Hunter) of what Macaulay said about the Puritans and bull-baiting—namely, that the Puritans were opposed to bull-baiting not because it hurt the bull, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators. It seemed to him, from the course the debate had taken, that the intention of the Government was not so much to benefit the English people as to pass a measure which would be injurious and offensive to the Irish people. The Government seemed to search with the greatest eagerness for opportunities of trampling upon the opinions of the Irish people. In that respect they had been joined by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay). Well, he (Mr. Hunter) was not surprised. His hon. and learned Friend was logical because he was one of those Gentlemen who thought it would be a great misfortune if Scotch questions were to be decided by Scotch Members; and, holding that view, perhaps, he would think it equally bad that Irish measures should be influenced by the opinion of Irish Members. He (Mr. Hunter), however, did not think that these were opinions that were held in Scotland, or were opinions such as would recommend themselves to this House. He was one of those who very strongly supported this Bill two years ago, on the understanding that it would not be applied to Ireland. What were the reasons that the Bill should be adopted for England and not adopted for Ireland? He would answer that question in a single sentence. It was the greatest fallacy in the world to pretend that the examination of an accused person was, under all circumstances, and in every case, necessarily for that person's benefit. There were many circumstances and many cases where it was a measure not calculated to promote the administration of justice, and not calculated to facilitate the discovery of truth, but calculated for a very opposite purpose. Why did he support this Bill for England? He did so for two reasons. In the first place, there were a great many poor people in England who could not afford to fee a counsel for their defence. One hon. Member stated to-night that the poor man had an advantage as compared with the rich man; but the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had reproved him for the assumption, and said that he himself believed that the advantage was in favour of the rich man as against the poor. He (Mr. Hunter) believed there was no system so well calculated to screen the guilty and protect the innocent as the English system of criminal procedure, when they had counsel on both sides and a Judge and jury. But, at the same time, his belief was that if they had not counsel for a prisoner there was no system so injurious to a prisoner as the English system. The reason was this. The English system was full of technicalities with regard to the examination of witnesses; and what chance could an unfortunate prisoner have to defend himself under these circumstances? Take a case. A witness was under examination. The Judge invited the prisoner to cross-examine that witness; and how did the prisoner begin? He said—"You said I did so and so." Instantly he was pulled up by the Judge, who informed him in solemn tones—"Sir, you must not make a statement, you can only ask a question." Well, the result was that the unfortunate prisoner was dumb-founded—he did not know where he was. He did not know in what shape to put his question, or how to conduct his case; and then what happened? Why, when all the witnesses were passed over without cross-examination, and the prisoner said "It is not true, as has been stated, that I did so and so, and so and so," the Judge interrupted him with the observation, "It is now too late to go into these matters, you should have asked questions with regard to these points of the witnesses when in the witness-box." The effect of the existing system, where counsel were not employed, was that the Quarter Sessions was very often like leading sheep to the slaughter; but the bias of the Judge was always in favour of the plea of "Not Guilty." He (Mr. Hunter) thought that the English Judges almost invariably acted upon the principle that it was better that 10 guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should suffer. In these cases, where prisoners were not defended by counsel, and where they were protected by perfectly fair and impartial Judges, he believed that the passing of this Bill would be an immense help and improvement to these prisoners, and, to a large extent, would be an effectual substitute for counsel they could not employ. But everything depended on the Judge—everything depended, also, on the prosecuting counsel, and on the way in which the prosecuting counsel was allowed to deal with the prisoner. There were such things as fair questions and unfair questions, and a prisoner was protected by counsel who could guard him against questions on cross-examination which ought not to be put, and even if the prisoner had not counsel in England when such questions were put, the Judge himself would protect the prisoner. But what assurance had they that before the Resident Magistrates—before the removable magistrates—any such protection would be afforded? Now, he read a short time ago a letter written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) relating his experience at the trial of Mr. Wilfrid Blunt before a County Court Judge in Ireland, and he saw there that the right hon. Gentleman expressed his horror and consternation at the spirit and manner, at the unfairness with which the trial was conducted both on the part of the prosecuting counsel and on the part of the Judge. That was the impression on the mind of an English gentleman who was accustomed to the administration of justice, in one case, and that a notorious one. That was not the case of an obscure individual, but one in which the Judge knew perfectly well that the eyes of the newspapers were on him, and it might, therefore, be assumed that unusual pains were taken by this gentleman to give, at any rate, an appearance of impartiality to the proceedings on his part. Now, if this happened in the green tree, what would happen in the dry? Could anyone say that anything had been done which would give any English or Irish Member the right to believe in the impartiality of the Irish Resident Magistrates? Since this matter was before the House in 1886, he (Mr. Hunter) had read the criminal cases and reports of trials before the Resident Magistrates in Ireland, and those trials had reminded him, not of anything within his experience, but of State trials which took place 250 years ago. If the present English Judges were like the Judges of the Stuart period, if prosecutors were like Lord Coke and other gentlemen who prosecuted in those days, he (Mr. Hunter) should be the last man to vote for a Bill of this kind, for instead of it being a weapon for the defence of the innocent, it would probably be used as an instrument for convicting prisoners when the prosecutor desired to do so. The Judge would draw attention to admissions made, and enlarge upon them and magnify them elaborately — he would drive home every single admission as a most valuable piece of evidence;

but when the prisoner said anything which was in his own favour, if the Judge was not honest and fair and impartial, what he would do would be this: He would point out to the jury—if he had to deal with a jury—that such and such statements rested on no better authority than the evidence of the prisoner himself. He (Mr. Hunter) could, therefore, well believe that in Ireland this Bill would operate to the greatest injustice and hardship, and the greatest cruelty, and would utterly and entirely defeat the object of justice—namely, the discovery of truth. In the present day, in England, we no doubt had impartial justice; but he would just quote one or two sentences from the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, to show the way in which prisoners used to be treated by Attorney Generals in those days. Just imagine if an Attorney General addressed prisoners in that way at the present time, how far they would be from passing such a Rule as that now before the House.

> "Sir Walter Raleigh interposed. The Attorney General said to the prisoner: 'Thou art a monster; thou hast an English face, but a Spanish heart.' Then when Sir Walter Raleigh objected that no evidence had been given against him, and said: 'If my Lord Cobham be a traitor what is that to me?' the Attorney General said: 'All that he did was nothing to thee, thou viper! For I "thou" thee thou traitor!'"

Would the present Government tolerate a rule such as that contained in this Bill when admonished by such a prosecuting counsel as this, and before such a court? To put the whole argument in a nutshell, he (Mr. Hunter) said that the examination of a prisoner as a witness in a case was not in itself necessarily an advantage to a prisoner, nor calculated to promote the cause of justice. It depended entirely upon the way in which justice was administered. It depended upon the Judge, and it depended upon the counsel. It was a powerful weapon, but it was a weapon which could as easily be used against the prisoner as in his favour; and he could not entertain any doubt, from the conduct of the Government in regard to this Bill, that their object was not merely to improve the law of England, but to give an extra example of the principle of that odious Bill that was passed last year.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said, the Government now proposed a measure which they declared was much desired by public opinion in England; but the Irish Members now came forward and said—"What you say may be correct; it may be true that the measure is demanded by the English public; it may be true that the public opinion of England demands that a prisoner should have the right of being examined on his own behalf in criminal cases; but, at any rate, there is no demand of that kind in Ireland. We, who represent Ireland in this House, are hostile to such a measure, and believe that so far from its being a benefit to Irish prisoners, it will, on the contrary, too often be used to their prejudice and destruction; and we ask that this measure should not be extended to Ireland." Now, the Irish Members were met by the declaration on the part of the Government that what they had to consider was, in the words of the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), a broad and great principle, and that it was not with reference to Irish needs, or the local circumstances of Ireland, that the measure must be considered, but by those broad principles which it was said were embodied in the Bill, and which it was generally agreed must be applied to the whole of the United Kingdom. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland threw out a challenge which he (Mr. Maurice Healy) thought was a very fair one. He taunted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) with what he considered a novel consideration as proceeding from those on the Opposition side of the House—that was to say, that it did not follow that because a measure was a good and desirable one for England the same measure was good and desirable for Ireland. It did not appear to him (Mr. Maurice Healy) that this was a novel principle coming from this side of the House. It appeared to him that it was because he endeavoured to lay down a principle of that kind in 1887 that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was condemned for having banished political economy to Saturn. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had laid down what he (Mr. Maurice Healy) considered a sound principle, and that was, that in applying a measure of this kind it should also be applied to Ireland, and that those who resisted it should show that the circumstances of Ireland materially differed from those of England. That was a fair challenge to make; and he (Mr. Maurice Healy) would answer that the case of the Irish Members was that the circumstances of Ireland in connection with the administration of justice and in matters with which this measure dealt were such that the Bill ought not to be applied to Ireland. He would quote, as that of a distinguished authority on this subject, the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the present President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) two years ago in one of the speeches he addressed to his constituents. Speaking to his constituents in Bristol two years ago the right hon. Gentleman said—"Unfortunately, to many persons the administration of justice appeared as a foe, and not as a friend." Now, that was the whole case of the Irish Members in regard to this measure. The whole case of the Irish Members might be compressed into that sentence of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that to many persons in Ireland the administration of justice appeared as a foe, and not as a friend. That was the ground they took up, that they maintained that because that state of things prevailed there, though what was urged with regard to the measure might be true as applied to England and Scotland, the arguments had no validity when they came to consider the application of the measure to Ireland.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being present,

Mr. MAURICE HEALY said, he asked whether it was not an unfortunate thing that time after time it should happen in that House that those who represented the vast bulk of the inhabitants of Ireland should demand certain measures, and that time after time the Government should set their wishes aside and refuse those measures; and that time after time measures emanating from the Front Bench opposite should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people in spite of the strenuous resistance of their Representatives? The Government proceeded on the principle that whatever the Irish Representatives asked in this House they should not get, and whatever they resisted and complained of they should have, whether they liked it or not. He would ask whether that was the proper principle on which to proceed in carrying on the legislation of this country? As it had already been asked in this debate to-night, what duties were Irish Members supposed to perform in this House? What was the value of their representation here if, when the wishes of the Irish people were expressed by those who were sent to this House to give voice to their opinions, they were set aside by right hon. Gentlemen opposite and treated as though they never existed? He maintained that the state of things which existed in England, and which was considered by hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite to justify this measure in England, did not exist in Ireland. In England they had none of that friction between the people and the forces of the Crown and administration of the law which unquestionably existed in Ireland. In England they had none of these political prosecutions which they too often had in Ireland. In England the administrators of the law were popular with the people; the law was carried out in sympathy with the people; English views and opinions were constantly consulted, and hostility between the people and the law was avoided with the utmost care. The very antithesis of this state of things existed in Ireland, and yet they were told that because the measure now before the House was fit and proper for this country, it was equally applicable to the totally different situation that prevailed in Ireland. Now, he was not going to labour the point which had been made more than once in this debate as to the way in which criminal prosecutions were conducted in Ireland from that which prevailed in this country; but he very well remembered how struck he was when he was told once by a gentleman who was concerned in many criminal prosecutions what took place in Ireland a few years ago. He remembered well the barrister, who defended a prisoner in a particular case—he thought it was in regard to a charge of conspiracy to murder or some charge of that kind—telling him that the trial was before a Judge and a special jury of the City of Cork, the prisoner being found guilty, and that when his (Mr. Maurice Healy's) informant went into the

Bar room, after the trial was over and the news came in that the unhappy man was convicted, the principal counsel for the Crown pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket and waved it over his head in exultation at having got the man 10 years' penal servitude. That was not the spirit in which cases were conducted in England, and he (Mr. Maurice Healy) declared that so long as they were conducted in that way in Ireland the effect of this, so far from being an advantage to accused persons, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite claimed for it, would be wrested to their destruction. As to the Maamtrasna case, it was said that if this Bill had been in existence at that time, the prisoner Myles Joyce, who was believed to have been innocent, would have been examined, and would have been able to give his version of the matter, and that, therefore, the miscarriage of justice that they all complained of could never have taken place. He (Mr. Maurice Healy) would say to English Members who made that statement that they little knew what went on in connection with criminal trials in Ireland. He supposed that while he had been in the Legal Profession he had had as much experience of criminal prosecutions as most people. He had defended prisoners of all kinds, criminals and non-criminals, and his experience was that no matter how innocent a prisoner might be, and however convinced they might be that he was telling the truth, the most dangerous thing the defence could do was to produce any witness whatever. Over and over again he (Mr. Maurice Healy) had carefully to consider with counsel whether he should not entirely refuse to produce any witness for the prisoner, having regard to the manner in which these witnesses would be treated by the Crown Counsel and the use which would be made of the necessary mistakes which ignorant peasants would inevitably make in being cross-examined and cross-hackled by the counsel as to what might be utterly irrelevant details. It would be the very same thing when instead of putting up an *alibi* witness or a witness to prove the case, they put up the prisoner to prove it himself. They would be always met by the argument, "If the prisoner was wicked enough to commit this crime do you think he would have any hesitation in going into the witness-box and committing perjury?" That was an argument which would be used with fatal effect with the jury, and, therefore, it would come to this, that everything that the prisoner could say that would prejudice him, every admission that he would make and everything that would fall from him and could connect him with the crime, would be used against him, whilst everything that he said in his own favour would be treated with the observation, "You cannot rely on what he says, for anyone wicked enough to commit this crime would have no hesitation in going into the box and committing perjury." It was said that there were a series of offences under the existing law in connection with which prisoners were already examined, and that what was wanted was simply to extend that series. It was said that if it was possible to examine a prisoner as a witness in one case, it was possible in all cases. Well, he (Mr. Maurice Healy) denied that. The cases where it was possible to examine a prisoner were of a special character. Take a case under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, for instance, and cases under the Explosives Act, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir. Henry James) had referred to. What was the fact? Why under the Explosives Act the duty was thrown on the prisoner of clearing himself. If he was found in possession of explosives his guilt was assumed until he cleared himself. Unless there was a clause in the Act to the effect that the prisoner should have an opportunity of clearing himself he would be necessarily convicted in every case. That was why a prisoner was examined in his own defence under the Explosives Act, and for almost a similar reason the law was changed in the late Criminal Law Amendment Act, because, in the nature of the offences, there were never likely to be more than two persons present—namely, the prosecutor and the prisoner; and, that being so, it would be most unjust to the accused party not to be allowed to give his version of what had taken place. That was the ground upon which the enactment in that case was defended—a special ground which would have application in nine out of 10 cases. This was the case in a whole series of Acts of Parliament—though a very small series—under which the prisoner had a right to be examined in his own defence. He could show the whole set of circumstances which induced the Legislature in each case to depart from the general rule that a prisoner should not be allowed to be examined on his own behalf. He said that, in this matter, the analogy of England did not apply—he held that the proper analogy in this case would be that of England 200 years ago when libel and other criminal prosecutions were of daily occurrence, and when Englishmen had to deal with such Judges as Jeffries and Colepepper, if it had been proposed that, under such circumstances, a prisoner should go into the box to be brow-beaten and attacked by the corrupt Judges of that day. He maintained that if they wanted an analogy in this matter they should not take that of the England of to-day, but the England of 200 years ago, when prosecutions for political offences were common and they had the same state of things prevalent in England as now existed in Ireland, political offences being frequently punished as crimes, and the whole of the country rankling under the oppression. Repeating what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) he declared that it was the worst pedantry to say that because this Bill would be proper for England, therefore it would be proper for Ireland. Then again, they were told that the Bill was proper for England whether public opinion was in its favour or not. It was said that in a matter of this kind there could be no real public opinion, as the matter was one more or less for specialists. It was held that the House should take the public opinion of those who were most familiar with the question. Well, decided in that way, he had no doubt the Government would be able to show that in this country public opinion was in favour of the Bill. But how were they to judge of English public opinion in the matter? They had a means of doing it by taking the opinion of the Parliamentary Representatives of the people, and he maintained that if they wanted to get the public opinion of Ireland they must take it in the same way. The Irish Members, however, were told that in order to find what Irish public opinion was the House must not take the statements of Gentlemen on the Irish Benches, but those of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the hon. and right hon. Members who sat by his side. That was the merest travesty of Parliamentary Government. It would be better that Parliament should not continue at all than that measures should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people in defiance of the wishes of nine-tenths of their Representatives. One day the Irish Members come here and asked for a particular measure, as they did yesterday, and they were voted down by horse, foot, and dragoons. To-day the Government bring in this Bill, and the Irish Members resist it, but they were not to be allowed to have a voice in the matter. He said, therefore, to the Government, let them expel the Irish Members from the House, but do not have this travesty of Parliamentary representation which was illustrated by the Government yesterday, and which was being further illustrated by the proceedings to-night.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said, he had long taken an interest in the subject-matter of the Bill, and he was surprised at the objection taken to it on the opposite side. He was also disappointed that the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had not enlightened the House more on the merits of the view he took. The right hon. and learned Member said the main reason why those on the Government side of the House should not support the Bill, and should not apply it to Ireland, was because their motives were liable to be misrepresented by the Irish Members; but he (Mr. Lawrence) would ask if ever they could go to ask a character from those Members? Was it not a fact that the best of their motives were always misrepresented? He (Mr. Lawrence), at all events, would not decline to support the application of the Bill to Ireland, because his motives were liable to be misrepresented by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. For instance, the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and other Irish Members said it was impossible to convince the Irish people that justice was fairly administered in Ireland. An Irish Member had even seemed to think that the Irish Judges were as bad as Scroggs and Jeffries.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE, continuing, said, when they heard such sentiments as those coming from hon. Members below the Gangway it was impossible not to look upon them as exaggerations, wholly incapable of proof. If the argument was that we could not convince the Irish people of the justice of modern judicial decisions in Ireland, he was prepared to give up trying to do so, and to take the course he believed to be right. The House was asked to pass the Amendment, because the magistrates in Ireland were removable, and therefore would act unfairly towards the prisoners brought before them. But even the Judges in England were not removable only as long as they behaved rightly while they sat on the Bench, and so in Ireland, he believed, that no magistrate would be removed as long as he dealt fairly to the criminal who stood before him, the person who charged him, and the Crown who put him there. The Amendment, therefore, if it was carried, would practically amount to a Vote of Want of Confidence in the integrity of the Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Chancellor, who might have the removal of the magistrate. The Amendment was a perfectly inconsequential Amendment, and unworthy of support by men who, like himself, believed that the Irish magistrates were only concerned in dealing out equal justice between man and man, between the Crown and the people who might find fault with it. He wished to point out that the measure before the House was of a permanent character. The legislation, such as that of last year, was in one sense of the word of a permanent character, inasmuch as it was not a temporary Bill, yet they all hoped it was a measure which would cease at some time to be law. But the present Bill was a measure the general principle of which applied to all judicial affairs, and therefore it was most fitting that it should obtain, not only in England and Wales and Scotland, but in Ireland too. It was, in fact, generally applicable to all systems of criminal procedure in the Three Kingdoms, and such being the fact they might fairly vote for it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) compared this kind of legislation to the Local Government Bill, and said the Government were inconsistent in refusing to apply the former Bill to Ireland and in applying the latter. The right hon. Gentleman must know perfectly well that the reason why the Government deferred granting Local Government to Ireland was because the Irish people were too much given to lawlessness, and the reason why the present measure was applied was twofold; first, because it would prevent any suspicion of the miscarriage of justice such as was said to have occurred at Maamtrasna; and next, just as on account of the lawlessness they refused Local Government, so they were called to make the law firmer because there was this lawless spirit abroad. If they did not pass the Bill that Session, they might wait until doomsday before the Irish people became so enamoured of the law as to come and ask them for a measure to secure that the right man should go to prison. He was glad the Government were resolved to stand fast. As to gaining the goodwill of the Members below the Gangway, he did not in the least expect them to do that, but if they went forward with careful legislation, the time would come when Ireland would appreciate their motives and do justice to their actions.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, that this question of the extension or non-extension of this Bill to Ireland was merely a matter of expediency. The question was whether, being desirous of seeing the Bill applied to England and Scotland, they were wise in attempting to hamper it with considerations of a political character. The whole matter was fully discussed in the Grand Committee some years ago, and they all knew that it was distinctly upon political grounds that the Irish Members objected to the application of this principle to their country. It seemed to him the question was whether the Government should adopt the easy method of applying the Bill to England, or whether they should hamper its progress and its efficiency by endeavouring to apply it to Ireland against the wishes of the Irish people and their Representatives. Perhaps they had better leave Ireland alone in dealing with this question. Putting that measure aside, he was glad to say that he concurred most heartily in the principle of the Bill. That principle was that in criminal cases an accused person should no longer have his mouth shut. It seemed to him that that had been one of the most extraordinary and incredible principles of English law, and when this Bill was passed the country would wonder that that superstition had continued so long. The principle of the Bill was that the mouth of a prisoner should no longer be shut, but that he should have an opportunity —he did not say should be compelled, for he did not know how they could compel a man to speak, as they did not apply the torture now-a-days—of giving his own version of the circumstances which had led to his prosecution; that, in fact, he should be invited to speak. But he doubted whether the principle of the Bill was put before the House in a right form. He had had great experience in dealing with the system under which prisoners were examined, and his own impression was that the form in which the Bill was put before the House now, and had been put before the House on previous occasions as applicable to England, was not the right form. He dissented from the view that they could not put before a Court of Law evidence which was not sworn. The examination of a prisoner should be a judicial examination of an accused person and not the examination of a witness. That was the law which prevailed in all countries except England and the United States of America, which drew their law from English law. It was the case in Scotland. It was proposed to apply the Bill to Scotland, but it seemed to him that it would be very difficult to do so in its present form, because they already had an examination of an accused person in Scotland. In Scotland they had never shut the mouth of an accused person, but, on the contrary, had always invited him to make a statement or a declaration. The first thing which happened when an accused person was brought before a Justice in Scotland was his being invited to make, what they called, a declaration, and this form constituted nothing more nor less than a judicial examination of that accused person. He had also had some experience of the working of this principle of law in India. In that country they had the advantage, not of an antiquated law such as prevailed in England, but of the most modern law made by the most modern Jurists, and what were the provisions of this Code in regard to the matter under discussion. Why, in this Code they had nothing of the nature of the accused person appearing as a witness, but they had a judicial examination of an accused person. That was the law of India and that was the law of Europe, including Scotland, and it seemed to him that it was the law of all countries that were not prejudiced by English law. It seemed to him that if they adopted this system of determining by law that a man's mouth should only be open when he appeared as a witness on oath in a case, they would be involving themselves in a very great difficulty. They might make provision by law, in the manner proposed by the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), to prevent the refusal or the assent of an accused person to give evidence being cited in the case against him. After all, that might be the law, but they could not prevent the minds of the jury being influenced, as they would be reasonably influenced, by the fact that an accused person had not come forward to give his own statement of the case. That being the case, it seemed to him that a prisoner would be practically forced to make a statement, and it appeared to him (Sir George Campbell) that it would be very right that so much compulsion should be applied. It was right in the interest of the innocent and the guilty alike that a certain moral compulsion should be exercised upon the accused in order to get them to make statements and say what was their account of the matter; but it seemed to him, to be placing a man in a very peculiar position to insist upon his taking an oath. It was all very well to do so, perhaps, and to adopt the existing system in cases of secondary degree; but when they came to cases such as murder, he asked, was it right or fair that they should drive a man to come forward and say upon oath whether he had committed the crime or not? That would operate as an irresistible temptation to a man guilty of murder to add to the peril in which he stood as to his life, peril to his soul, by perjury. The kind of judicial examination he referred to would be more efficacious in getting out the truth than any forcing of a man to make a statement on oath. He thought some matters would have to be settled in regard to the Bill. At present, apart from the giving of evidence on oath, it was doubtful whether or not a prisoner could make a statement in his own defence. The practice of English Judges varied very much in that respect, some Judges permitting it and others refusing to do so. It was desirable that that question should be settled, and, for his own part, he was anxious to see it settled in the direction of allowing a prisoner to make a statement in his own defence. He thought that the Bill should be read a second time, but that it should be considerably modified, and perhaps it might be so modified.

SIR WILLIAM EWART (Belfast, N.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had assumed too much that Irish opinion was in favour of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). On the contrary, he (Sir William Ewart) had no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland would hail with pleasure the passing of this measure. What was this Bill? It was simply a Bill enabling a prisoner to give evidence, if he wished, and enabling a husband or wife to give evidence in a case against the other. He confessed that he had heard with some surprise the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. After this question had been so thoroughly thrashed out, and public opinion had been so fully formed upon it, he thought the hon. Gentleman was very bold in coming forward practically to offer it opposition, and especially when he himself had said that there was really no difference of opinion as to the passing of the measure for the United Kingdom. No case had been made out, to his (Sir William Ewart's) mind, for excluding Ireland from the operations of the Bill. The opposition had entirely failed; indeed the reasons given by the hon. and learned Member for Longford were altogether in favour of the Bill. If the Irish Judges were corrupt—which he indignantly denied—it was all the more important and needful that it should be in the power of the accused to clear himself. He was, as far as possible, in favour of equal laws for all parts of the United Kingdom, and on every occasion, as far as possible, he should give his support to equal laws. On the present occasion he had much pleasure in supporting the application of the Bill to the whole of the United Kingdom.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he felt bound, on behalf of the constituency that he had the honour to represent, to enter his protest against this Bill. He believed that it contained a very dangerous principle. He was against the principle of the Bill altogether, but he was especially against it on account of the proposal to extend it to Ireland. He thought the Bill a mistake, and it seemed to him, in his humble judgment, a rather curious thing that the producers and the supporters of it during the whole course of the debate, though it was a Bill proposing to introduce into English law a principle accepted elsewhere, say in France, had never produced anything like an array of testimony to show from experience that the principle was one which worked to the approval of the lawyers of France or other countries. In his opinion, and he thought this would be borne out by everyone who had followed even recently the course of certain trials in France, the principle of this Bill was one which, at any rate in France, had not been an unmixed good. The principle they were about to give up, that of excluding a prisoner from making a statement or submitting himself to cross-examination, had, no doubt, a great many drawbacks. He should like to know any human principle that had not; but had the principle they were proposing to introduce no drawbacks? He held that it had, and very decided ones. He believed that the principle of making the Judge a seeker out of evidence, and an examiner of a prisoner as a witness in a case, was one which would interfere very seriously with that judicial and impartial frame of mind which had so distinguished the English Judges. That judicial and impartial frame of mind had raised the English Judges above the Judges of any other country in the world. The English Judges remained in a higher atmosphere, and, if they were asked to step down from that higher atmosphere and to examine prisoners, the effect would be to interfere with that judicial frame of mind which had always characterized them. Look at any trial in France—at the Pranzini trial for instance. He (Mr. T. P. Gill) had read the manner in which the Judge at that trial examined and cross-examined and bullied and threatened that prisoner. It was the most scandalous thing that ever occurred. The Judge taunted the man with keeping back the truth. He said—"You were cruel to your mother, why should you not be cruel to your mistress?" and so on. Then look at the still more recent case, the Vignor affair, in connection with the trial of M. Wilson. They had there the Judge d'Instruction, who entertained at dinner one of the defendants in the case. He gave the man a rich dinner, and plied him with wine, and over the walnuts and the wine he succeeded in extracting damaging information from him, and after that he talked over the telephone wire with another of the defendants, changing his voice and pretending he was M. Wilson. Why did he do that? Why, because in France the constant effect of this system on the judicial frame of mind had been to transform the Judge more or less into a seeker out of evidence and a runner down of the prisoner. The glory of a Judge in France consisted, just as much as if he were a Crown Prosecutor in bringing a prisoner to conviction. That Judge had carried the thing so far that it became a public scandal, and he was dismissed from his office. That was only a few weeks ago, but let them take any trial that occurred in France, and they would find that a Judge in France behaved on the Bench in the manner in which he examined a prisoner and ran him down, in a way which would be shocking to the sentiments which had grown up in England with regard to the course of law. He (Mr. T. P. Gill) further said that the principle was a dangerous one, though they were rushing upon it with a light heart. The House seemed to be taking for granted that it was all very fine. He had no doubt that there was a great deal to be said for it, and that there were a great many cases in which justice would benefit by having this principle in force, but he thought that the cases in which it would do an injury to the cause of justice, and create almost a scandal, would be more numerous still. He did not think the House had properly weighed the pros and cons of the case. That being so as to the principle generally, how much more were the Members for Ireland justified in opposing the application of such a principle to Ireland. The Judges in England, and the Crown Prosecutors in England, as had been universally conceded, lived in a higher atmosphere, in a more impartial, a more calm, and a more just atmosphere than the Judges and Crown Prosecutors in Ireland; and if this practice of allowing a Judge to cross-examine a prisoner, and to sift his evidence, were injurious in the case of men who were entirely impartial and lived in an impartial atmosphere, what would be the effect in Ireland on Judges who were simply fresh from being Crown Prosecutors and reeking with an atmosphere like that of Green Street? He knew a case where a man was tried for his life—the Gould case. The Crown Prosecutor did his best to get Gould convicted. He made a most eloquent denunciation of the prisoner on his first trial. The prisoner came up for trial a second time, and the Crown Prosecutor, who prosecuted him on the first trial, was sitting on the Bench in the case of the second trial. Fancy a case like that. In Ireland they had such jobbery and partizanship in connection with the administration of the law that even a Judge failed to see any impropriety in sitting on the Bench and trying a prisoner on a second trial whom he had himself prosecuted on his first trial. Could such a thing occur in England? He ventured to say that no one could get up and contend that it could. To say that they were introducing on equal terms a principle such as that contained in the Bill into England and Ireland was to make a most monstrous and unjustifiable assertion. The whole course of feeling in Courts of Justice in Ireland was that both the Judge on the Bench—this might be an injustice to a great many of the Judges in Ireland, but let that be as it might—the feeling was that both the Judges on the Bench and the Crown Prosecutors were excessively anxious to obtain convictions. The belief in the popular mind was that when a man was unfortunate enough to get into the Dock there under any circumstance whatever, the only person not bent on running the prisoner to earth was the counsel engaged in his defence. In this country he believed that a Crown Prosecutor would occasionally give up his brief when he was convinced that a prisoner was innocent. ["No, no!"] Well, some hon. Member said that. ["No, no!"] Well, someone had said the converse of that at any rate, that was to say, that the counsel for a guilty person would sometimes gives up his brief when he thought the prisoner guilty, and it was only fair to assume that where an opposing advocate thought a person innocent he would also be moved to throw up his brief. They might, however, live till doomsday before they would see such a thing as that occur in Ireland. As had been stated in a newspaper article not long ago, the whole purpose of an Irish Crown Prosecutor was to get a verdict, hook or by crook. The gentlemen on the Bench in Ireland were gentlemen who had stepped up from the position of Crown Prosecutor to that of Judge, and, that being so, it appeared to him that a case of irresistible force had been made out against the introduction of the principle contained in the Bill in Ireland. He thought it an unwise principle, and one the advantages of which would not come near to overpowering its disadvantages. In the case of Ireland there was no reason whatsoever why this principle should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people against the wishes of the vast majority of their Representatives. Goodness only knew that they had had instances enough in which the inequalities existing between the two countries had been exemplified of late, and it appeared to him that the House of Commons was making itself absolutely grotesque by these contradictions. There had been three measures introduced into the House of Commons within the space of some months. One of these proposed to make a tremendous change in the law of Ireland, but it did not propose to apply the same change to England. Another of these measures proposed to make a radical extension of liberty in England and not to extend it to Ireland; and now the Government brought forward a proposal which they said was good for England and they gratuitously proposed to extend it to Ireland, although the Irish Members entreated them with all the warmth they could command not to do so. In spite of the wishes of the Irish people the measure was to be thrust down their throats. He thought that the most prejudiced mind in the House would agree that there was a gross disregard of popular opinion in Ireland in this House when it sought so to legislate. He should hope that the protest the Irish Members had made to-night would have some effect on the Government, though he was afraid he was much too sanguine in entertaining such a view. At any rate, disregarded as his opinion might be on the question, he had felt it to be his duty, and he distinctly agreed with all his Colleagues in giving a most determined opposition to the application of this Bill to Ireland.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, that the argument of the depravity of the French Courts did not apply in the smallest degree to the present case, because it was not proposed to put in the power of any Judge to cross-examine a prisoner under any circumstances whatever. He rose principally to protest against the universal assumption of hon. Members below the Gangway to speak for the people of Ireland. It was enough for them to express the opinion of the people of Ireland on the question of Home Rule when they had taken steps to consult them on the matter under discussion; but even then he ventured to think the Gentlemen who were notoriously nominated by a committee — which, though it might be either small or large, was not the constituency of Ireland — had no right to assume to speak in the name of the entire people. He would not venture to speak for the portion of Ireland which he had the honour to represent, because he had not evolved out of his own inner consciousness what their opinion would be. He did not assume to have the gift of prophecy, as hon. Members opposite did; but he believed if the question were put before them they would one and all be decidedly in favour of the provisions of the Bill being extended to Ireland. When he practised at the Bar he considered the want of such a provision a fatal defect in the English Law as compared with that of other countries. He hoped no representation of the supposed opinion of Ireland would prevent the Government pushing the Bill through for the whole Kingdom.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange), said, it seemed to him that there was a fallacy lurking under the arguments of the opponents of the Amendment, which ought to be put plainly before the House. It was said to Liberals that if they accepted the principle of the measure for England, they must be wrong and inconsistent in supporting the Amendment; because if the principle was good for one case, it must necessarily be good in the other. That seemed to him (Mr. Neville) to be fallacious, for this reason; because he did not think that by accepting the principle of the measure they committed themselves to the opinion that it was a principle to be applied to all places and under all circumstances. There could be no doubt that, originally, the exemption of prisoners from giving evidence was intended to be for the protection of the prisoner. He had not such a low opinion of our legal ancestors as to suppose they were utterly wrong in the view they took at the time of what was for the prisoner's benefit, or that the prisoner would have been better if he had in old days been allowed to give evidence in England. The reason why he and he believed the majority of the English Liberal Members on that side of the House would support the measure, was because they believed, in the existing circumstances of England, it would be for the benefit of innocent persons who might be accused of crimes, because they and most of the English people had full confidence in the administration of justice in that country; and if they took the opinion of those persons who might be in the position of being tried before a Judge and jury in an English Court, they would tell them they were perfectly satisfied that they would get a fair trial. He was not there to say the contrary was the fact in Ireland. It would be utterly presumptuous for him to say anything on the question, for he did not profess to have any personal knowledge of the administration of justice in Ireland; but he would say that it was not a question for English Members to decide. He could not conceive with what object the Representatives of the Irish people were there, if the House was always to turn a deaf ear to those Representatives and to the feelings and wishes of the people of Ireland. The hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) had characterized the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) as extraordinary. He (Mr. Neville) was not surprised at that statement, because it appeared to him that the Solicitor General did not in the least understand what the right hon. and learned Member for Bury's argument was. That did not astonish him (Mr. Neville), because that right hon. and learned Gentleman was speaking from a standpoint which unfortunately hon. Members opposite seemed perfectly unable of taking up for themselves. What he understood the right hon. and learned Member for Bury to mean was, that the reason why he supported the measure before the House—and he had himself brought in a measure to the same effect on a former occasion—was that he believed it would be in the interests of innocent persons accused of crime; but he did not for a moment conceal from himself, or from the House, that if the giving of evidence by prisoners was something liable to abuse, it might be used against the interests of the innocent person accused of crime. And though he had perfect confidence that in this country it would not be so, and though he knew that the mass of the people in the country so regarded the question, he understood from the Irish Members that that was not the point of view adopted by the Irish people, and, therefore, without expressing any opinion himself as to whether or not there was any truth in the allegation that there was a difference in the atmosphere of the Criminal Courts in England and in Ireland, he said it was enough for his argument if the Representatives of the Irish people said so. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury said that if the Irish representation meant anything at all, it meant that great attention should be paid to the views of the Representatives of the Irish people; and in a case in which they were dealing with the interests of the Irish people, and in which the interests of the country were not suffered to enter, he would give way to their opinion, and would not be a party to forcing what was brought forward as a remedial measure upon the Irish people in the teeth of their Representatives. The argument advanced by the right hon. and learned Gentleman had, he thought, proved clear and convincing to many Members on both sides of the House. It had been said by Members on the Government side of the House that the worse the atmosphere of the Courts, the more important the application of this measure to Ireland. He did not think such a position could be honestly and sincerely maintained. He did not believe for one moment that if the Representatives of the English constituencies had not unbounded faith in the fairness of criminal trials as they take place in this country, they would get a single man to vote for any alteration in the law, and they understood from the Irish Members that, unfortunately, they did not take the same view of criminal prosecutions in Ireland. The reason why he ventured to protest against the course adopted by the Government was, that it seemed to him that, in habitually neglecting the representations of the Irish Members, and refusing them a share in the boons in which they asked to be permitted to share, and insisting on their being partakers in a measure which they had resisted as strongly as they could, they took a course which could not lead to the reasonable and just government of Ireland. He would add his humble voice to those already raised on his side in urging the Government, even now, to pass the measure as one applying to England only, and not to insist on forcing it on Ireland. If the Government persisted in the course they had adopted, they were only putting one further argument in the hands of their opponents as showing that they were determined to proceed in a course of utter disregard to the representations of the Irish people whenever they submitted them to that House.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) said, that it seemed to him that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General in introducing this Bill had hardly given to the House the idea that he was dealing with a Bill of any importance. He introduced it in a few words, and even in those he seemed to deal not only with assumptions, but with what appeared to be false arguments. This Bill—this precious document—had been 20 years hatching, and, remembering that fact, anyone would have expected it to be a very perfect one when produced, but they had just heard from a Scotch Member that it would be absolutely unworkable without the introduction of a new section into the Scotch Procedure Act. He (Mr. Chance) looked upon this measure as one to compel a prisoner to give evidence on his trial, and not only that, but also to give evidence on preliminarly proceedings. Although under the law, as it at present stood, a prisoner might reserve his defence without any observation being made upon the fact, in the future, if this Bill became law, he would be put in the position that the magistrate presiding at the hearing of the charge against him might inform him that if he were an innocent man it was his duty to go into the box, and that if he were not he could adopt the protection which the law gave him and keep out of the box. The result of this would be that they would have jurymen prejudiced against the prisoner in consequence of what took place at the preliminary examination, and even before the trial had taken place. The Attorney General spoke of hardship occurring under the present law. He told them of the case of two prisoners, one of whom was married while the other was not, but lived with a paramour. The married man had not the benefit of his wife's evidence; but the other man had the benefit of evidence given by his paramour. He (Mr. Chance) somewhat irregularly interrupted the hon. and learned Gentleman, and somewhat to his surprise he discovered that the hon. and learned Gentleman had not taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the result of the trial. It seemed to him, therefore, that the case did not afford an illustration of any hardship. There might have been hardship if the hon. and learned Gentleman had gone on to tell the House that the married man was convicted and that the other man, who had the benefit of his paramour's evidence, escaped. The Attorney General then fell back upon the favourite argument of the Front Bench; for he told them that the Judges were in favour of this change. He (Mr. Chance) did not know that Judges, in dealing with changes of the law, had been celebrated for their wisdom or the large-mindedness of their views. It was mentioned in the House last session that Judges were unanimously opposed to the alteration of the law which would prevent men being hanged for thefts of goods worth 5*s*. and upwards. The Judges then prophecied that there would be an enormous increase of offences against property; but when, in face of their opposition, the cruel and contemptible law of that time was changed, no evil results were known to follow. He thought that in moving the second reading of a Bill of this kind the Attorney General might have found some better advocates than the Judges. Now, he came to the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), who made what he must undoubtedly call one of those able speeches which were more suitable for the atmosphere of a Court of Justice with a jury in the box than for the atmosphere of the House of Commons. Curiously enough, the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech was the first example of the evil operation of this Bill, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was ill-advised enough to get, so to speak, in the witness-box to defend and explain his own position, and, therefore, he was pounced upon by the Solicitor General, who showed, to his own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of the Supporters of the Government, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury had damaged his case and deserved the verdict to go against him. The Solicitor General spoke of the difference between the atmosphere of an English Law Court and that of an Irish Law Court; but the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman amounted to this—that because he could prophecy that this Bill would be good for England it should therefore be good for Ireland. His own observations, however, were more or less destructive of his argument, because he commenced by assuming, in his own favour, an absolute unanimous opinion in favour of this Bill. He should have gone on to show that the conditions under which law was administered in Ireland were the same as those under which law was administered in England; but he did no such thing. It seemed to him (Mr. Chance) that it rested with the supporters of this Bill to make out a case for it in Ireland; but they totally ignored that branch of their duty, and they wandered away into the most vague and extraordinary assumptions. It was a curious fact that the most strenuous supporters of this Bill were utterly ignorant of the proceedings in Courts of Justice in Ireland. If they knew as much as he and his hon. Friends did of those proceedings, their advocacy of the extension of this Bill to Ireland would be much less powerful than it was. Certainly there was one Irish lawyer put up to speak in favour of this Bill—namely, the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), but the hon. and learned Gentleman knew very little indeed of the administration of Criminal Law in Ireland; happily for himself, up to the present he had been engaged in the serene and calm atmosphere of the Equity Courts. He (Mr. Chance) did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman had ever defended a prisoner in his life; certainly, he had never acted as a Crown Prosecutor. Therefore, it seemed that the evidence in favour of the Bill given upon the Government side of the House was notable for the fact that the Gentlemen who gave that evidence knew nothing about the subject. What was the reason for this new-born zeal for the administration of law in Ireland, and for the protection of Irish prisoners? During the whole of last Session and the Session before the House was wearied by statements from the Treasury Bench that prisoners in Ireland could not be convicted; but to-night he had not heard from the Treasury Bench of any case in which a prisoner was convicted when he was innocent of the crime he was accused of. The attitude had been to assume that in every case when a prisoner was convicted he was convicted properly. In such circumstances it could not be surprising that Members of the House who sat upon the Irish Benches looked with a certain degree of suspicion upon this new-born zeal in the interests of prisoners in Ireland on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite. If they were so zealous and so desirous of improving the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland, he advised them to keep the pledges they made in this House, and not to continue under the stigma of being guilty of what was described in the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) as a dishonourable breach of faith. The administration of law would be less unsatisfactory if, in the first place, there were appeals from magistrates who were not only removable, but Executive officers; and if, in the second place, the Executive in Ireland, when they desired to procure the conviction of political opponents, ceased to resort to the disgraceful practice of packing juries. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Dublin University (Mr. Madden) had still another argument. He said that even granting that justice was not satisfactorily administered in Ireland, the right which this Bill gave would be a protection for the prisoner—that it would be a weapon which would aid in the execution of justice, and therefore no one ought to grumble at that. That argument seemed to him (Mr. Chance) to be based on a somewhat curious fallacy. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that the sharper the weapon, independent of the hands that had to wield it, the better it was for the administration of justice. That would be all very well if the people had confidence in the administration of law in Ireland; but, not having that confidence, it seemed to him to be a curious argument that the sharper the weapon, and the more powerful the means of conviction you put into the hands of Crown lawyers, the more certain it would be that justice would be done. The argument was illogical, and completely at variance with the rest of the arguments advanced from the other side. He thought he could throw a little light upon the real reason why Ireland had been included in this Bill. When this Bill came on for discussion late last Session there was a very vigorous opposition to it from these Benches, and the result was that it did not pass either for Ireland or for England; and he had reason to suppose last year that the punishment which would be inflicted by Her Majesty's Government for their action would be to insist, in spite of any argument adduced in this House, that this Bill should operate in Ireland as well as in England. That was the real or one of the real reasons of the persistence of the Government in forcing this Bill down their throats. The second reason was that, in accordance with the policy which was now fashionable on the Benches opposite, the Government desired to give the Irish Members a snub. He passed from that, however, because it was not worthy of very considerable mention; but the last and gravest reason was the desire of the Government, that men of the type of Cecil Roche and other gentlemen who wielded judicial powers in Ireland, should have an opportunity of proving their zeal for the maintenance of law and order by cross-examining and torturing prisoners, by commenting in severe language upon their refusal to criminate themselves, or upon their refusal to subject themselves and their evidence to the strongest observations on the part of Crown lawyers. What would be the benefit to a prisoner in Ireland of any evidence given by him? It was obvious that if the prisoner went into the witness-box his evidence would be divided into two parts—the first part would be the evidence in his own favour, and as to that there would be an argument of undeniable weight and force used against him. The Crown would say, and say with great force and truth, that where a man was on his trial, the result of which might be that he would be imprisoned for 10, 15, or 20 years, or, perhaps, for life, he had the very strongest possible interest in making out the best case he could; and they would say that, under such conditions, the sanctity of an oath could not weigh very much with him; that he had most overpowering reasons for perjuring himself, and therefore anything said in his own favour must be pooh-poohed, and must not be considered by the jury. On the other hand, the most trivial particular in which the prisoner disagreed from his own witnesses would be given enormous significance to discredit them, the Crown officials would say—"This is a man who has the greatest interest in procuring his own acquittal, and he is a man who must know the facts of the case." For these reasons, stated as briefly as he could state them, he certainly strongly protested against this Bill being applied to Ireland, but even though Her Majesty's Government might not be inclined to admit the validity of these reasons, he thought it would be but a very small concession on their part to let this Bill have a fair trial in England before applying it to Ireland. In spite of all prophecies the Bill might not be quite successful, and it was only a reasonable thing that this new medicine should be tried in the country where there was some confidence in the administration of the law and the constitution had strength to bear the experiment even if unsuccessful, leaving it to be extended hereafter to a country in which there was not such confidence, if its operation proved beneficial.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker ——

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he considered the subject had been now sufficiently discussed, and that it must be generally felt that the time had now arrived when he was justified in claiming the right to move that "the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 160; Noes 111: Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I beg, Mr. Speaker, to submit to you a question on a point of Order. I submit, Sir, that under the Rule, while you are able and compelled to put the Question regarding the Amendment which is now under discussion, and which you have put without permitting any further discussion on that Question, yet that when the time comes for you to put the Question upon the Original Question—that is, that the Bill be now read a second time—it is within your competency to allow further discussion if you should think fit, upon that Question, and I wish to give you Notice that I shall claim the right, subject to your permission, to discuss the Question when you put the Main Question.

[No reply.]

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 173; Noes 119: Majority 54.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beaumont, H. F.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coghill, D. H.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Col. hn. L. P.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Ewart, Sir W.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fulton, J. F.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gedge, S.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Granby, Marquess of
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hastings, G. W.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Holloway, G.
Howard, J.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Johnston, W.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Ker, R. W. B.
Kerans, F. H.
King, H. S.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mulholland, H. L.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Parker, C. S.
Pearce, Sir W.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanley, E. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Tollemache, H. J.

Tyler, Sir H. W.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
White, J. B.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Ballantine, W H.W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barry, J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, W. L.
Brown, A. L.
Brunner, J. T.
Burt, T.
Caldwell, J.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, H.
Causton, R. K.
Chance, P. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Condon, T. J.
Conway, M.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Haldane, R. B.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harris, M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, M.
Healy, T. M.
Hingley, B.
Hunter, W. A.
Joicey, J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, J. E.
Kilbride, D.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Leahy, J.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
M'Donald, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Mayne, T.
Morley, right hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
OBrien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Provand, A. D.
Pyne, J. D.
Quinn, T.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Roberts, J. B.
Roberts, J.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Samuelson, G. B.
Sheehan, J. D.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Warmington, C. M.
Wayman, T.
Will, J. S.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, H. J.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Biggar, J. G.
Carew, J. L.

Main Question, "That the Bill be read the third time," put.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker, I desire to say a few words in view of the decision which the House has just come to—that the Bill shall apply to Ireland —upon the general application of the measure, but more especially upon its application to Ireland, and in doing so I shall endeavour to keep myself strictly within the Order of the Rules of the House and to refrain from discussing even incidentally any matter which would be more properly discussed upon the Amendment which the House has just decided upon adversely to our views and to our wishes. But perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to say generally that I greatly regret that I did not have an opportunity of speaking upon that Amendment. I was a Member of the Grand Committee which, in 1884, sat upon a measure of a similar character to this. It is a question that I have always taken a great deal of interest in, and there are several special reasons on account of which I think I might have been afforded an opportunity of speaking my views upon the immediate question which was then under discussion of the application of this measure to Ireland. However, Sir, that is a matter which has been decided upon by the House. It is past and gone, and I will only say regarding it, that I trust that when the Bill gets into Committee the Government may see fit to re-consider their decision, which may, perhaps, have been rather hastily arrived at to-night without full consideration of all the various aspects of the question, and that they may be led, as the result of the reconsideration, to treat the Bill as a purely English measure, and as one in which we consequently need not take that interest which we are so unfortunately compelled to take in many measures which are brought forward by the Government, and proposed to be extended to Ireland. I had hoped and was most desirous that the pledge the Government gave at the commencement of this Session, that this was to be a British Session, should be kept, and I think it is most unfortunate that, except in a case of absolute and urgent necessity, such as the measure brought forward yesterday, and which, if it were agreed to, we should not have trespassed on the Government for any facilities whatever in getting through its Committee stage. I have been most anxious that this Session should be a Session of

British legislation, and had the Government carried out the pledge to which I have referred, we should have been able to show we can stand by and exhibit the height of fair play to the two English Parties when discussing questions of legislation only affecting their own country. But the decision which the House has come to puts us in this position—The measure, which we should otherwise have been only too glad to see passed through the House without our opposition, we shall be compelled to oppose on every stage, simply from the point of view of Ireland. I regret this, as I have said, very much. As regards the general question, and entirely apart from the merits of the measure itself, there are special features in reference to the application of this Bill to Ireland—namely, that it will, in our opinion, injuriously affect our country—which would make it absolutely necessary for us to oppose the measure as a whole. I do not disapprove of it, and, therefore, I regret that necessity. It may be, and undoubtedly is, a very good and salutary measure for Great Britain, and we should have been most happy to have seen it passed through its different stages with the general consent of all sections and all Parties in this House; but you put us in this position, by compelling us to take an interest in it from an Irish point of view; you put us in the position of obliging us to subordinate your interest to our interest with regard to it, and, naturally, as Irishmen, we must feel a greater interest in the measure, because it is an Irish measure, than we should feel in it if it were English. I think I have said enough to show that we have some ground of complaint; first of all, because I was shut up from expressing my opinion fully upon the proper stage of the measure, and, secondly, on account of what I think has been undoubtedly the most precipitate conduct of the Government in the matter. I trust that without my saying anything more upon the subject at the present moment—because I shall have another opportunity of saying what I have to say with regard to the subject on the Motion for going into Committee upon the Bill—that the Government will see the reasonableness of the position which we have taken up, and that they will feel that it is desirable and will allow us to treat the measure as a purely British measure.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I think, from the point of view of progress of the Bill, that it is to be regretted that, owing to the course which the Government have thought fit to take in this matter, we have not been allowed to hear the views of the hon. Member for the City of Cork upon the issue before us; and that, consequently, there is danger that the progress of a measure, upon the principles of which we are all agreed, may be considerably impeded. I think that it will be a very deplorable circumstance if we do not have an opportunity of hearing the views of so leading a politician as the hon. Member for the City of Cork on the question. I must say that I am also afraid that the discussion of the Bill in Committee will be much impeded by the fact that the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) was not able, owing to the Forms of the House, to alter his Amendment in conformity with the views I ventured to lay before the House. I think that the course which the Government have taken will by no means expedite the progress of the Bill. I regret and deplore that fact, as I think that the measure is one that should be passed with all possible expedition. I repeat that by the course which the Government have taken, they have done that which will most certainly delay the passing of the measure.

MR. DILLON: I rise only for the purpose of entreating the Government to put the Committee stage of the measure off until a reasonable period after the Easter holidays.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can only say that I regret equally with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. John Morley), that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) did not avail himself of the ample opportunity he had of expressing to the House his views with regard to this measure. ["Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member did not, to my knowledge, appear in his place until a very late period of the debate, which has now gone on for five hours. I am satisfied that, had it been necessary, any hon. Member on this side of the House would have willingly yielded to the hon. Member had he shown a desire to address the House during those five hours. In response to the appeal of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), I may say that the Government are perfectly willing to give ample time for the consideration of the measure before taking the Committee stage. They, therefore, do not propose to take that stage until Tuesday fortnight, April 12, at a Morning Sitting.

Mr. DILLON: That does not meet our views at all, and I cannot consent to the Committee stage of the Bill being taken so soon.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 231; Noes 92: Majority 139.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon 12th April, resolve itself into the said Committee." —(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to again set down the Committee stage for the 3rd May. The Government had, in spite of the earnest appeals and protests of Irish Members, made of that Bill an Irish question; and he felt bound to say, and believed many Members would agree with him, that seeing the Bill had been made one of vital interest for Ireland, some consideration should be show, for the convenience of Irish Members. They were dragged some 400 or 500 miles from home and detained half the year in Parliament, and when permitted to return for a short Recess on Tuesday next the Government deliberately proposed that after a brief interval Irish Members should be dragged back again to London by the necessity of being in their places to attend to this Bill which, in spite of all that might be said to the contrary, was a question in which the Irish people took a vital interest. Of necessity, then, Irish Representatives must attend the discussion; and so the Government compelled them to return from Ireland not allowing a reasonable Recess. So far as he could remember, at least for a very long time, it had been an uniform practice to consult, in some measure, the convenience of Irish Members in regard to the arrangement of Irish Business, whether Bills or Estimates, or whatever Business it might be in which they were interested. Now, when the right hon. Gentleman was asked to meet the views of Irish Members in this particular, he met the appeal by deliberately setting down the Bill for the first day of the reassembling of Parliament after the Easter Recess.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that was not so; Thursday the 12th, was three weeks hence.

Mr. DILLON said, he was under the impression that Thursday fortnight was mentioned. However, be that as it might—[*Laughter*]—it was not such an absurd proposal as he supposed it to be, but at the same time let hon. Members remember that the proposal was to hurry Irish Members back to London and the proposal was made in the most gratuitously offensive way, the convenience of those Members being in no way consulted. It was really and truly very great evidence of want of consideration and want of courtesy on the part of the Government towards Members who sincerely desired to let the Bill pass, and have been prepared to do so. If the Government had met Irish Members in a reasonable spirit, the second reading might have been passed hours ago, and the Committee appointed for any day desired. But they must needs make of it an Irish question, in spite of all protest, and it had become a burning Irish Question to which Irish Members must attend, for their constituents required that duty of them. He thought it a reasonable proposal to fix the date as May 3rd, and made that Motion.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "12th April," and insert, "3rd May," —(*Mr. Dillon,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '12th April' stand part of the Question."

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, there was one point in respect to April 12th which had considerable interest for the House generally. For that day the second reading of the Local Government Bill had been set down. Were they to understand that the Government intended to postpone the Local Government Bill? [Mr. W. H. Smith: No.] Then was the House to understand that this very important Bill was to come on at a quarter to 12, or some such hour? What was the real meaning of this Government?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the right hon. Gentleman had not been very long in the House, but he had been a Member long enough to be very well aware that the Government or any Member in fixing a day for the further consideration of a Bill, fixed a day before which that Bill could not be taken. The day named for this Bill (April 12) would be just one week after the re-assembling of the House. Parliament assembled on the 5th, and he thought he would be fairly meeting the views of hon. Members from Ireland who were usually in their places within four or five days of Business being resumed. It was utterly impossible for any Government to insure that among the first Business no measure should be proceeded with that had not more or less interest for Irish Members. It was the intention of the Government to proceed with the Local Government Bill on the 12th, and in all probability the Standing Committee on Law Bills would by then be set up, and it was within the power of the Government to refer this Bill to that Law Committee; but the Government must reserve to themselves the right, if they thought fit, to refer this Bill to the Law Committee on or after the 12th.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he could not be exposed to the same reproach as his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for he had the misfortune to enter the House of Commons at the same time as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman would have made his views a little more clear if, when he was asked about the Bill, he had stated that he did not mean it to come on on the 12th of April. But the understanding now was that the Bill should not come on on that day. ["No!"] Then let the understanding be made clear. The right hon. Gentleman seemed not only to have misled Members on that side, but even some who sat behind him. Was the Bill to come on on the 12th of April? Was it to come on on the same day with the Local Government Bill? Surely the hon. Gentleman who said "No" must have been in the House a very short time indeed. But he thought they all understood the Bill would not be taken on the 12th of April, but that it might come on after then. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, the Bill was to be referred to the Law Committee, which was not yet set up; therefore, he thought his hon. Friend need not trouble himself by the fear that the Bill was likely to come on on the 12th of April, or for a good many days after that.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not been very long Leader of the House, but he had been long enough in the position to have the opportunity of showing some consideration and courtesy towards an important minority in the House. But from the period of his appointment to his elevated position to the present hour that section of the House had experienced from him nothing but discourtesy. They had never received from him at any time during his tenure of Office that consideration that had usually been extended to that minority by every other Leader of the House, Conservative or Liberal. It had always been usual to show some consideration to Members coming from distant parts of the Kingdom from constituencies separated by hundreds of miles from London. Members who had, or most of them had, quite enough to attend to in their own country if they were only allowed to attend to it. They could have pardoned the right hon. Gentleman for his action when he said it was his "painful" duty to move the Closure; but there was no duty incumbent upon him to fix for the next stage of this Bill a day that must be inconvenient to the opponents of the measure. To-night the right hon. Gentleman had had a good lesson on the method of managing the Business of the House. From the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, who was not by any means an enemy of the Government, he had received disinterested advice to treat Irish Members with some consideration. For the first time the House was made aware of the intention of the Government to refer this Bill to a Grand Committee, which, in his opinion, would add still further to the unpleasantness connected with the proceedings on the Bill. If that was the intention, then the composition of the Grand Committee became an important question for Irish Members. They were entitled to know who were the Members of the Committee, and must be present when the composition was discussed. Was it reasonable to bring Irish Members over from Ireland on the 12th, on what was practically a wild goose chase, and when there was no probability of the Bill being discussed. Usually, Irish

Members were thought to take a malignant interest in the Business of the House; but now they asked to be excused from attending for some time, and when they wished to take a respite, they were to be needlessly brought over either to discuss the Bill or the composition of the Committee to which it was to be relegated. The Government might have saved the whole evening from 6 o'clock if they had struck Ireland out of the Bill, and a quarter of an hour ago might have saved this further debate, if they had allowed a reasonable interval for the next stage, having regard to the position of Members who represented distant portions of Her Majesty's Dominions. Was it likely that their loyalty towards the British Parliament would be increased by being met in such a spirit as this? If they were obliged to attend at Westminster some consideration should be shown them. Therefore, he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who seemed about to rise, would signify his sense of the ease with which the Conversion scheme was allowed to pass—in which certainly Irish Members might have taken considerable interest—by showing some consideration to Irish Members, and reciprocating the courtesy shown him, and allow a longer interval before proceeding with the Bill.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had risen not for the purpose the hon. and learned Member suggested, but to enter his most emphatic protest which would, he believed, be endorsed by all hon. Members on that side, and many Members on the other side, against the charge of discourtesy made against his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith). He did not think such a charge, coming from such a quarter, ought to be passed over in silence. Frequently assailed by vituperation and personal observations, of which he felt sure the great majority of Members opposite would be ashamed, his right hon. Friend had invariably observed the most courteous bearing towards all sections of the House. In his duty of arranging the Business of the House his right hon. Friend had conscientiously endeavoured to meet the wishes of all sections and to preserve moderation in debate, and it was really a libel upon his right hon. Friend to say he treated any Member with discourtesy. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford spoke of the manner in which the Conversion scheme was received—of the consideration shown to that measure. He (Mr. Goschen) was grateful to hon. Members of all sections for that consideration; he acknowledged it fully, he had acknowledged it that afternoon, and he was glad to do so again. With regard to this particular question, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) seemed to ignore the constant custom of Governments and of private Members to put down Bills for a certain day, to be considered on that day, if circumstances were favourable, but more frequently they were set down so that when the day came they might be more definitely fixed for consideration. It was with that view, and certainly not to cause inconvenience to any Member, that it was proposed to set down Committee on this Bill for April 12th. It was obviously almost impossible that the Bill could be discussed on that day, but it was possible that a proposal might be made on that day to refer it to the Grand Committee on Law. The Government must reserve, in regard to this, the same right they had in regard to other Bills; but he repeated it was highly improbable and almost impossible to take the discussion on April 12th.

MR. PARNELL said, surely the sensible course, seeing that it was highly improbable, and almost impossible, that the Bill could be taken on the 12th, was to accede to the very reasonable request of his hon. Friend, and not compel Irish Members to take a long journey—some of them of 600 miles—on the bare possibility of the Bill being taken. The return journey of some of his Colleagues covered 1,200 miles. He would not enter into a discussion of the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman, except to say that on a recent occasion, when he exhibited not his courtesy, but his back to Irish Members in moving the Closure, they were not able to distinguish that feature in the view presented. To his (Mr. Parnell's) knowledge, the right hon. Gentleman had not shown any courtesy or consideration to Irish Members during the Session—not to speak of other Sessions—which, he submitted, might have been expected under the circumstances. The greatest possible consideration ought to have been shown by the right hon. Gentleman towards Irish Members, who had, on every possible occasion, when the interests of their country allowed them to do so, effaced themselves in order to expedite Government Business. The return for that made by the right hon. Gentleman was to move the Closure whenever an Irish Member rose to speak. He would not say that was want of courtesy, since the phrase was objected to; but he would say it displayed a want of consideration and an absence of that judicious character that best became a Leader of the House, and the presence of which ensured that rapid transaction of Business the Tory Party professed to desire. Of all Leaders of the House he had known, the right hon. Gentleman was most like that publican who was his own best customer—he was the champion Obstructionist of his own business. The House had for the last hour been discussing a matter which never ought to have been discussed, if the right hon. Gentleman had possessed a particle of tact. He had originated by his conduct first one discussion, then another, on points entirely unnecessary; and so far had he been from saving time, that he had now lost the chance of bringing forward another Government measure, to which it was presumed he attached some value, and which he might have proceeded with had he shown some consideration for the views of Irish Members. It was to be hoped that at the eleventh hour the House might be spared a prolongation of this discussion, and as it was highly improbable, and almost impossible, that the Bill could come on on the 12th April, the Government would accede to the Motion of his hon. Friend, and put it down for some day when it would be highly probable and most possible that it would be brought on.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 198; Noes 130: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 53.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Committee upon *Thursday* 12th April.

MORTMAIN AND CHARITABLE USES BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 174.]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Mr. Parnell

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he had no desire to object to the Bill, but he would ask that it might be referred to the Grand Committee on Law. It was called a consolidation Bill, and no doubt it was intended to be so. But it was not; it was a translation of an old law into a new law. The Bill also re-enacted some objectionable provisions, and in Committee it would be proposed to introduce Amendments with respect to those provisions; but he would not pursue his remarks at any length, if it was understood the Bill would be referred to the Law Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, if the right hon. Gentleman would take time and carefully look through the Bill, he would find that, with some variation in language, every section was taken from the old Acts. Still, if it was the desire of the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill should go before the Grand Committee, he would not oppose it.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 12th April.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[BILL 165.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped the House would allow this Bill to be read a second time. It did not inflict any charge upon the taxpayers, but was intended to make provision out of ecclesiastical funds alone, as occasion required, for the restoration and repair of the Abbey. The dilapidations of the Abbey were serious and considerable, and he trusted the House would agree to the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea) said, he hoped that the Bill would not be taken at such a time (12 o'clock). He did not know that he objected to it altogether, but there were certain provisions in it that required certain explanation—what amount they were called upon to vote——

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, there was no amount to vote at all.

Mr. DILLWYN said, at all events, he did not think the Bill should be passed hurriedly, and he moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn,*)—put and *agreed to.*

Debate adjourned till *To-morrow.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (ARREARS OF RENT) BILL.—[Bill 147.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sinclair.*)

SECOND READING.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, after the statements made by the First Lord of the Treasury to-night in connection with the debate of the previous day, he did not feel himself justified as a private Member in keeping his Bill any longer on the Paper. But in moving that the Order for the second reading be discharged, he wished to be allowed to say that he would not allow that any responsibility rested upon himself and his friends; the responsibility must rest on the shoulders of the responsible Government of the country. He moved that the Order be discharged.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the order for the Second Reading of the Bill be read and discharged."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Order *discharged.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in lieu of the duties of Customs now charged on rum and on British and Irish spirits imported into the Isle of Man, there shall be charged the duties following (that is to say):—

	s.	d.
Rum, including shrub, of the British Possessions, the gallon	8	6
British and Irish spirits, not otherwise exempted from the payment of duty, the gallon	8	6

—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Objection taken; and, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Preston Bruce, Bill to organize and promote Secondary Education in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Esslemont.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 187.]

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (REPORTS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law as to Reports of Proceedings in Courts of Law, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Asquith.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 188]

ROADS AND BRIDGES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1878, AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, Bill to amend "The Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Sir Archibald Campbell.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 189.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 23rd March, 1888.

MINUTES.] — Select Committee — High Sheriff, *nominated.*

Public Bills—*First Reading*—House of Lords (Constitution) Reform * (51); Women's Suffrage * (52); Tithe Rent-Charge * (53); Tithe Rent-charge Recovery and Variation * (54).

Second Reading—Land Charges Registration and Searches * (40).

Second Reading—Committee negatived—Considered —Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt Conversion (49), and *passed.*

Third Reading — Lunacy Acts Amendment * (48), and *passed.*

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.—(No. 49.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*The Viscount Cranbrook.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, that in the drafting of the Bill the funds of the Duchy of Lancaster had been placed within his disposal as Lord Chancellor. It was too late to alter this now; but as soon as possible the fund would be restored to the name of the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland) the Chancellor of the Duchy.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly; Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with:* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

IRISH FISHERIES.—RESOLUTION.

The Earl of HOWTH, in rising to move to resolve—

> "That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty's Government,"

said, that last year a Royal Commission had been appointed to take into consideration the condition of certain industries in Ireland, prominently among them the fishing interests. That Commission had issued a Report and made certain recommendations. Lord Monteagle had given Notice, at the termination of the Easter Recess, to criticize that Report. If the noble Lord had confined himself to that, for his own part, he would not have ventured to interfere; but the noble Lord also intended to inquire of Her Majesty's Government how far they proposed to act upon the recommendations inserted in the Report of that Commission. He felt that if he were to delay any observations which he might have to make upon this matter until after the Easter Recess, Her Majesty's Government would have quite made up their minds upon the course they intended to pursue. His first object was to impress upon the Government the earnest necessity of inspection, with regard to the fishing grounds on the Irish coast, before any legislation took place on the subject of those fisheries. His second object was expressed in the terms of the Resolution on the Paper. In 1865 a Royal Commission had been appointed for the purpose of taking into consideration the fisheries of the United Kingdom, and had earnestly supported the inspection of these grounds. Year after year the Irish Fishery Inspectors had been urging that they should have vessels placed at their disposal for the purpose of thorough and scientific investigation. This matter might be regarded from two points of view—Imperial and local. Those who were engaged solely in the fishing industry in Ireland were in a very bad way; and but for a prospect of increased stir in the industry, it would be better for them to take to some other pursuit in life. The question was also a very important one in connection with the great food supply of the nation. The Irish were not fish eaters themselves, and it was really the English consumer who was chiefly interested in this question. Owing to the rates charged by the railways, the transport of fish from East to West was very small. On the Midland in 1887 only 1,200 tons of fish were transported across Ireland from the West to the East Coast, and the only chance of stimulating the demand for fish caught off the Irish Coasts lay in providing cheap and easy access to the English markets. Wick, in Scotland, was 700 miles from London, and the fare for a ton of fish from Wick to London was £3 1*s.*; Cork, in the South of Ireland, was 550 miles, and the fare for a ton of fish from there to London was £5 1*s.* He, therefore, thought it clear that the Irish fish could not be profitably brought to the English markets unless its transit was facilitated by subsidies. The noble Earl, in conclusion, moved the Resolution which stood in his name.

Moved to resolve—

> "That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty's Government."—(*The Earl of Howth.*)

Lord DENMAN said, that although railway and canal rates might be regulated, yet the passage by sea would have to be attended to in order to render the carriage of fish to England cheap. He had great confidence in his Friend Sir James Allport, but thought he had possibly erred in making first-class tickets too cheap. It cost him before railways were established £30 to go from and to London and back from Derbyshire; but now an expense of only £5 6*s.* for three persons was charged—

two first-class £4, one third-class £1 6s. He ventured to think that if, without loss to Railway Companies, more could be charged for all passengers and less for heavy goods and articles of food, it might benefit Ireland.

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl Cadogan) said, no one could feel surprised that the noble Earl, whose experience in regard to Irish fisheries was so great, should bring forward this question. He would not, however, attempt to follow the noble Earl through the various points on which he had touched, but would content himself with saying that it was impossible for him to accept the somewhat sweeping Resolution which had just been moved. He rather hoped that the noble Earl would content himself with the valuable remarks which he had made—remarks which would receive the attentive consideration of Her Majesty's Government—and would not press their Lordships to divide. He was glad, however, that the noble Earl had afforded him an opportunity of stating to the House the position of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Reports of the Royal Commission to which the noble Earl had alluded. The noble Earl was aware that the Royal Commission had made two separate Reports. The reference to the Commission was in the following order—first, they were asked to inquire into the subject of fisheries and harbours; secondly, into the subject of arterial drainage; and, thirdly, into the subject of railway communication. But the Commission thought it right to apply themselves to the subject of arterial drainage in the first place, and having reported upon it, the Government thought it their duty to deal as soon as possible with that subject. A Bill on the question was now in an advanced stage of preparation; the Government hoped to lay it on the Table in a short time, and that it would receive the sanction of Parliament during this Session. Though they had received the Report of the Commission on the fisheries, they had not received either the evidence or copies of the important documents on which the Report was based. As soon as they had received the evidence and the documents, they would proceed with the task they had undertaken with reference to the fisheries, harbours, and railways also. More than that he could not say on the present occasion. The subjects which had been referred to the Royal Commission were, in the opinion of the Government, of the most vital importance to Ireland. They might not, perhaps, be as exciting or sensational as other questions relating to Ireland which had occupied the attention of Parliament; but they were subjects which must be treated with the utmost care and consideration. The Government would not defer laying their proposals before Parliament any longer than they could help, and he trusted they would receive the support of noble Lords on the other side of the House.

Lord DENMAN explained that the Secretary to the Board of Trade had shown him that he was wrong in thinking that the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill did not apply to Ireland, and he was ashamed not to have studied the 4th clause of the Bill more carefully; and, as it had passed their Lordships' House, he regretted that he had said anything in doubt of its efficiency.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

QUESTION.

The Earl of MINTO asked Her Majesty's Government in respect of their forthcoming Salmon Fisheries Bill for Scotland, Whether the Bill will apply in whole or in part to the Tweed and its tributaries, which are at present subject to the provisions of special and private Acts of Parliament; also, whether it is their intention to introduce the Bill and have it printed and circulated before the Easter Recess? The noble Earl said, it was most desirable that, as far as possible, all Bills affecting Scotland should be produced before Easter. The County Meetings were held on the 30th of April, and opportunity for the consideration of such measures ought to be given them.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (The Marquess of Lothian) said, Her Majesty's Government did intend to bring in a Salmon Fisheries Bill for Scotland, and that that Bill would include the Tweed and its tributaries, except those tributaries which were in England. As to whether the Bill would be printed and circulated before the

Recess, he thought the noble Earl would see that that was not possible now. This was not a simple subject, and it would be by no means easy to draw up a Bill that would be satisfactory to all the parties concerned.

TWEED FISHERIES ACTS.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

THE EARL OF MINTO, in moving for Returns for each of the years 1886 and 1887 of the number of cases that have been the subject of trial for alleged offences under the Tweed Fisheries Acts, distinguishing those that occurred during the open season for rod and line fishing from those that occurred during the close season for rod and line; also the number of acquittals and the number of convictions, and the punishment awarded in each case of conviction; also distinguishing the cases (so far as the nature of the charges admits) that have occurred in respect of alleged offences on the main stream of the Tweed from those that have occurred on each of its tributaries, and giving the name of each such tributary; the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:—Section 1st to comprise the Tweed and its tributaries from its mouth up to Coldstream Bridge; 2nd, from Coldstream Bridge to Kelso Bridge; 3rd, from Kelso Bridge to Melrose Bridge; 4th, all waters above Melrose Bridge; also, as regards the Teviot (the chief tributary of the Tweed), the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:—1st, from Teviot Foot to Ancrum Bridge; 2nd, from Ancrum Bridge to Hornshole Bridge; 3rd, all the waters above Hornshole Bridge. The noble Earl said these Returns would be useful in showing not only the whole number of offences and offenders against the Tweed Acts, but in showing with some particularity the parts of the country and the streams which furnish the largest proportion of illegal fishers. It was often argued that if the public were allowed free liberty of rod fishing, the public would become the most effective protectors of the rivers against illegal fishing. He himself would greatly like to believe that this was the case, though he greatly doubted it. Anyhow these Returns would throw some light upon that point. He rather anticipated that the Returns would prove these two things—first, that the number of offenders against the Tweed Laws was in inverse proportion to the value of the respective rights of fishing in different streams; second, that the number of offenders was proportionately largest in respect of those streams which were practically open to the public already, and where the riparian proprietors abstained from exercising their proprietary rights.

Moved, for "Returns for each of the years 1886 and 1887 of the number of cases that have been the subject of trial for alleged offences under the Tweed Fisheries Acts, distinguishing those that occurred during the open season for rod and line fishing from those that occurred during the close season for rod and line:

Also the number of acquittals, and the number of convictions, and the punishment awarded in each case of conviction:

Also distinguishing the cases (so far as the nature of the charges admits) that have occurred in respect of alleged offences on the main stream of the Tweed from those that have occurred on each of its tributaries, and giving the name of each such tributary:

The Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:

Section 1st. To comprise the Tweed and its tributaries from its mouth up to Coldstream Bridge.

2nd. From Coldstream Bridge to Kelso Bridge.

3rd. From Kelso Bridge to Melrose Bridge.

4th. All waters above Melrose Bridge:

Also, as regards the Teviot (the chief tributary of the Tweed), the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:

1st. From Teviot Foot to Ancrum Bridge.

2nd. From Ancrum Bridge to Hornshole Bridge.

3rd. All the waters above Hornshole Bridge."—(*The Earl of Minto.*)

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN) said, the Government were prepared to give the Returns asked for, but he was afraid that they would take some time to prepare and cost considerable expense. He would like to call the attention of his noble Friend to the fact that he had altered the terms of his Motion three times. When Motions of this kind were altered and added to from time to time, it was extremely difficult to obtain that information which was necessary before assenting to the Motion. He agreed with what the noble Earl had said, that poaching was not so great on the main streams as on the tributaries. This fact was known, he thought, to everyone, and therefore he could not understand why the noble Earl required a Return with regard to that. He had, however, no doubt the Returns when prepared would be interesting and useful. He did not know whether the noble Earl wanted the Returns for the purpose of making any changes in the Salmon Fisheries Bill when introduced. If he did he was afraid it would delay the Bill considerably, and he did not wish to do that.

Motion *agreed to.*

Returns ordered to be laid before the House.

SALE OF IMPORTED MEAT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they will not introduce some measure to prevent the fraudulent practice of selling foreign imported meat as home produce, a practice which inflicts serious injury on the agricultural interest and on all producers and consumers in the United Kingdom ? said, he had received so many communications on this subject from all parts of the country that he was convinced that it was regarded as one of very great importance to the agricultural interest. The noble Marquess at the head of the Government had recently stated that there was no chance of any reversion to Protection. He was very glad that the noble Marquess had made that distinct announcement; but if there was no chance of Protection, it was all the more incumbent on the Government to see that justice, at any rate, was done to the agricultural interest. The Prime Minister had the other day expressed the desire of Her Majesty's Government to do all they could to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural interest, ; and one step in that direction was taken by this House when, a few days ago, it carried the Amendment of the noble Earl (the Earl of Jersey) upon the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and struck a blow against the preference given in railway rates to foreign produce. When, some years ago, foreign meat was first imported from Canada and the United States the meat was openly sold as such, the public were informed of what they were buying; and got it at extremely cheap prices—at 4½*d.* or 5*d.* a-pound, and frequently it was sold at shops specially opened for the sale of such imported meat. But now the foreign meat was sold with home meat, and no distinction was made between the two. Instead of the poorer classes getting the imported meat at 4*d.* or 5*d.* or 6*d.* a-pound they paid 8*d.* or 9*d.*, the money taken from the price of the home meat being added on to the price of the foreign meat. Unfortunately, there was nothing in the law to prevent this. He was informed that a quantity of horse flesh was also sold in this way. A remedy for this state of things which he suggested was very simple, and could be effected by the insertion of two clauses into the Adulteration Act of 1875. One clause should provide that every person selling foreign meat should take out a licence ; and the second clause should impose severe penalties on any person who sold foreign meat without having over his shop a board stating that the shopkeeper was licensed to sell foreign meat. This would have the effect of putting purchasers on their guard against having foreign meat palmed off upon them as home meat, and at the high prices of home meat. It would be the greatest boon not only to agriculturists, but to consumers throughout the Kingdom. It might be said that this was a side-wind of Protection. It was Protection, but protection of the poorer classes rather than of the agriculturists in the first place. It was a strange fact that if the question was put to a butcher whether or not he sold foreign meat he always said he did not, yet immense quantities of foreign meat were being annually imported. Last year the amount of foreign meat brought into London was double what it was in the preceding year. What became of this foreign meat if it was not sold by the butchers ? Were the Government willing to allow this practice of deception to continue ? Parliament had shown itself alive to the importance of matters of this kind by passing the Adulteration Act, the Margarine Act, and the Merchandize Marks Act. It interfered to prevent the sale of margarine under the name of butter, although margarine was as good as butter. But no one could deny that foreign meat after the miles it had to travel by land and sea was, when it reached this country, inferior in quality to home meat. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not hesitate to step in and interfere to stop the deception now practised, and if they did so they would confer a boon on both agriculturists and the poorer classes.

LORD TRURO said, the noble Lord probably did not anticipate a satisfactory reply to his Question, for the point he had raised was part of a much larger subject. Trade frauds should be dealt with more severely. There was no country in Europe in which trade frauds were so prevalent as in England, and they would never be stopped until some personal disgrace was inflicted upon the men who habitually defrauded the public in the way that was now frequently done. In France the law was much more severe, and the Penal Code provided that persons found guilty of trade frauds might be punished not merely with penalties but by imprisonment, extending from 15 days to three months. The consequence was that these offences were much fewer in France than here. He should like the Government to lay a Return on the Table of the convictions obtained in this country merely for the adulteration of milk. The penalties that had been inflicted were much too small to deter offenders. In France a man could be fined and sent to prison for 15 days, and the Court could order the publication of placards announcing the sentence imposed.

LORD WANTAGE said, he thought that the proposal of the noble Lord would cause great inconvenience. The most respectable butchers bought and sold good foreign meat with advantage to themselves and to their customers. If they were compelled to take out a licence and proclaim themselves buyers of foreign meat they would, he feared, be prejudiced. Foreign meat was sometimes better than English meat, and farmers themselves often sold it. What would really do good would be to encourage farmers to take advantage in greater numbers of the retail trade. Four or five farmers by associating together could carry on the trade of butcher with much profit to themselves. He was afraid the proposal of the noble Lord would be prejudicial to the traders, and in no way beneficial to the buyer.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, he was surprised that the noble Lord who had introduced this subject should have appeared to complain of an absence of sympathy in the Government for the agricultural interest, he should have thought that the reference to agriculture in the Speech from the Throne and the observations which had recently fallen from the noble Marquess at the head of the Government ought to have impressed everybody with the fact that there was no ground for any such complaint. The interest taken by the Government in subjects affecting agriculture had been shown by the passing of the Margarine Act, the introduction of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and the proposal made in "another place" for the relief of local taxation. With reference to the particular question brought forward by the noble Lord, he should like to ask him whether those who complained of not getting English meat when they wanted it, really asked the butchers to give them English and not foreign meat. His advice to buyers was, in the words of the advertisements, "When you ask for it see that you get it." The noble Lord wished the Government to introduce a measure for preventing the fraudulent practice of selling foreign meat as home produce, but if the practice was a fraudulent one he presumed it could be reached by the law as it stood. The Merchandize Marks Act laid down that any one who applied any false trade description to any goods should be held guilty of an offence. Then the 6th section of the Act of 1875 relating to the sale of food and drugs, enacted that "no person shall sell an article of food which is not of the nature and quality asked for." There were also Acts of Parliament under which people could be punished for obtaining money under false pretences. Until the noble Lord and those whom he represented had tried whether the object which they had in view could not be attained by the operation of some of those laws the Government could hardly be asked to introduce fresh legislation. The Return asked for by the noble Lord opposite he would be happy to consider; but he did not himself think that it would be desirable to impose heavy penalties and imprisonment for offences such as the noble Lord had referred to. There were cases in which the infringement of an Act might almost be thought laudable; for instance, when a man mixed a little water with the gin which he sold.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that the 6th section of the Sale of Food and

Drugs Act could not serve the purpose of the noble Lord (Lord Lamington), because it was clearly directed solely against adulteration.

LORD LAMINGTON asked whether it was to be understood that the sale of foreign as English meat was punishable under Clause 6 of the Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act?

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, that he wished carefully to avoid expressing any legal opinion upon this subject. All that he would say was that, until the noble Lord's friends should have tried unavailingly prosecution under the existing law, there could be no good ground for asking the Government to initiate legislation.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 48.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

EARL SPENCER said, he believed it was now perceived that the Bill did not meet a case which he adduced when the Bill was in Committee. He was not now prepared with a clause, but he trusted that if it were found practicable to frame a clause, the object he had in view would be attained when the Bill was in Committee in the other House.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, there was some doubt in the matter; but he was inclined to think that the noble Earl was right, and if it turned out to be so he should have no objection to the necessary amendment of the Bill.

LORD BALFOUR said, the communications that had taken place had reduced the matter at issue to a small point, which should be fully considered before the Bill reached the stage of Committee in the other House.

Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 3ª accordingly; Amendments made; Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

TITHE RENTCHARGE BILL, AND TITHE RENTCHARGE RECOVERY AND VARIATION BILL.

BILLS PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY), in rising to call attention to the mode of levying tithes, and to present a Bill, said: I wish to bring before your Lordships a Bill with reference to the incidence of tithes and the lamentable occurrences which are taking place, especially in the Western part of the country. It was not possible last Session to pass the measure which passed through your Lordships' House, because it did not commend itself to the judgment of the House of Commons. A good deal of discussion took place upon tithes, and we were able to see where the difficulty with respect to them lay, and we are now able to introduce a measure to modify the difficulty. I must first call your attention to what the difficulty is. Tithe is a very peculiar property. It is not a burden on the land; it is not a burden on the landowner; it is a burden on the produce of the land. But the produce of the land is in the hands of the occupier; while by law the person responsible with respect to the tithe is not the occupier but the owner. The result of that state of things is this—that in order to get at the produce of the land you must levy distraint upon the occupier. Yet the occupier, who is not the debtor, has to suffer the inconvenience of distraint for a debt that is not his own. And the difficulty arising from that state of things has been a good deal envenomed by its being mixed up with social and theological discussions, into which I need not further enter. The first consideration which occurs to us, on reviewing the discussion which took place both last year and before, is that the difficulty has arisen because the Act of 1836 has not been exactly obeyed, or rather that the landlords, in their contracts with the tenants, have been able to contract themselves out of the operation of the Act of 1836. By the 80th clause of that Act the tenant is indeed liable for the payment of tithe; but having paid the tithe, whatever it is, he is at liberty, just as in the case of the Income Tax, to deduct the payment that he has made from the rent he owes to the landlord when he comes to pay the rent to the landlord. But the difference between the case of the tithe and the case of the Income Tax is that the Act of Parliament establishing the Income Tax guarded that tax from being imposed upon the tenant by a subsequent contract between the landlord and the tenant; and the Tithe Act overlooked that precaution. If the precaution had been taken this difficulty would not have existed now. If that precaution is taken now the difficulty will only exist as regards the existing contracts; it will not exist as regards contracts which come into existence after the passing of this Bill. It appears to me, therefore, that if there is a question as to what it is best to pass, we have to economize our time; the first thing we ought to do is to pass an Act remedying that defect in the Act of 1836, avoiding contracts between landlords and tenants which throw the burden on the tenants instead of leaving it, as the Act does, upon the landlord—in fact, putting tithes on a level with the Income Tax in that respect. If we do that the evil will be remedied as to future contracts, and all existing contracts will in due time die out. I propose, therefore, to split up the Bill of last year into three separate Bills. The first Bill I submit to your Lordships is one for simply putting tithe on a level with the Income Tax in respect to that precaution, and avoiding for the future contracts which prevent the tenant from recovering tithe he has actually paid by enabling him to deduct it from the rent due to the landlord; That will only operate in the future. What are we to do with contracts that exist now? The evil is too great, the injury done to the relations, especially between the spiritual titheowner and the landowner and occupier, are too serious to allow us to wait till the slow operation of the change of which I have spoken shall make these conflicts for the future impossible. Last year our proposal was simply to transfer the liability from the occupier to the owner, to put an end to the remedy of distraint, and, with certain elaborate precautions, to enable the titheowner to recover his tithe from the owner of the land. I believe that is a perfectly sound and innocent remedy. But I am bound to say that, though the Bill passed this House with great ease, the landowners, of whom we have not a few here, accepted it apparently with goodwill; but when it came to "another place" of more jealous and exacting scrutiny there was a very considerable number of landowners who were not at all prepared to submit to this new responsibility being placed upon them. There is no doubt it laid a considerable responsibility upon them, because it made the whole property of the landowner liable to tithes, which it is not now. We should have contended that the new liability was so surrounded by precautions that no practical harm could result to the landowner. However, we are very anxious if we can—I do not know whether it is possible—to find a mode of effecting the change which shall neither injure nor frighten the landowner, and, therefore, we propose to take another course this year. We shall leave the case of the owner who occupies his own land just where it is; the grievance does not arise with him, only that there is a remedy which is already in the Act of 1836 which we shall slightly develop and apply to cases of land occupied by the landowner and other lands—I mean the remedy that is given by the Act of 1836 in cases where there is not sufficient to distrain upon on the land. The Act of 1836 provides that where there is not enough produce on the land to pay the tithe, the titheowner may step into the place of the landowner and become *ad hoc* the landowner, receiving the rent until the tithe shall be paid, and the costs incurred shall be paid, when the land shall revert to its proper owner. We propose to re-enact that remedy in a more modern form by enabling the County Court to appoint a receiver of rents where the tithe is not paid. The receiver will be appointed at the suit of the titheowner when the tithe is a certain period in arrear, and that receiver will have the right of either farming the land, if it is in the occupation of the owner, or of receiving the rent, if it is in the occupation of another person. As soon as the tithe is discharged and the costs paid the receiver will hand the land back to its true owner. I think that remedy, though effective, will possibly be costly; and we propose another remedy in the cases where the occupier is not the owner of the land. Distraint in that case, which is the present remedy, will be forbidden; and in place of it the County Court will, on the petition of the titheowner, issue an injunction to the farmer warning him to pay the tithe out of the first money that comes into his hands as the produce of his farm. If, after the receipt of that notification, the farmer shall pay any rent to his landlord before he has paid the tithe to the titheowner he will have accepted the tithe as his own personal debt; in other words, we attach the rent. I do not know whether that will be held to be a more satisfactory remedy than the one we proposed last year. At all events, it is theoretically a much sounder remedy, for it limits liability absolutely to the produce of the land and imposes no liability on the landowner himself. The produce of the land will be liable, as it is now, in the first instance, to tithe before any rent is paid, and when that tithe has been paid the rent will be paid as before. It will be obvious, of course, that this remedy will be of no use in those cases, of which I am afraid we have some instances in the country at the present time, where the produce of the land after all expenses are paid is not enough to pay either the tithe or the rent. In these cases, of course, it is of no use to attach the rent; to attach the rent when there is no rent is an illusory remedy; there is no possible remedy except the remedy of a receiver in that case. Although the titheowner has a right to get whatever the land yields, I believe in reality in those cases that, practically, the right no longer exists; and where the land has failed to yield produce the titheowner, as well as the landowner, is practically dispossessed of his property. That, putting it simply, is the nature of the remedy which we offer in this Bill for the purpose of getting rid of the grievance of distraint. It is bad to leave the law as it is even if it would work; but the friction and animosity produced are so great that we are bound to find some other means of conveying to the titheowner that share which is his due in the produce of the land. One thing more. Great complaint has been often made of the operation of the seven years' average. It is said, and said justly, that where a depression and consequent fall in the prices of agricultural produce set in, the first years of the seven years' period continue by their high prices to bear down the farmer long after his farm has ceased to yield the high results on which those first averages were based. We believe it would be more just to take a three years' average, and that that would be sufficient. The Bill of last year had yet another part which I do not propose to introduce to-night, although I should be glad if it were possible to come to some arrangement with the Episcopal Bench in regard to it—I mean that part of the Bill which concerns the redemption of tithes. I had the honour to introduce into the Bill of last year clauses which would have facilitated the redemption of tithes, I believe, in a practical manner; but the terms, which were favourable enough to induce the landowner to redeem, were thought too favourable to the landowner, and those who represent the Church pressed for some modification of those terms. Whether we shall be able to effect such a modification I do not know, but I must express a strong conviction that if redemption is thought by those who represent the Church to be a desirable object, it will not be brought about without a sufficient concession to the landowners to induce them to undertake it. However, that is a matter hardly relevant to my present purpose. I propose now to present the Bills which I have described to the House, and after the Recess I will ask your Lordships to read them a second time.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he did not propose at the present stage to discuss measures which were not in terms before the House; but still he should like to say a few words on the observations of the noble Marquess. He was glad the noble Marquess had recognized that a change in the mode of recovering tithe should be made; but it was a matter which might cause landlords a loss. With regard to the first Bill, he was inclined to say that the provision that the landlord should not be able to contract himself out of the obligation to refund the tithe to the tenant was a fair and just provision. In a great number of instances it was the practice for landowners to permit the tenant to deduct from the rent the tithe which he had paid, and he believed in those cases no difficulty had been experienced. In that respect the Bill would establish throughout the country a practice found to work smoothly in places where it was in operation. With regard, however, to the provision for the recovery of the tithe from tenants holding under existing contracts, he confessed to some doubt—he hoped it might prove otherwise—lest the proposed remedy should turn out to be too complicated, and after all should not remove the difficulty with regard to the tenant. That was to say, they would still have to go to the tenant, and the tenant would, no doubt, in many cases continue to act unreasonably. He was afraid that any system by which it was necessary to make application to the tenant would be apt to produce friction. On the question of redemption he entirely agreed with the noble Marquess that unless the Church was prepared to make some concession it was practically impossible to effect the object. It was not that it was desired to take away from the Church her due share in the produce of the land; but the present was a case in which, in the interests of the Church herself, he believed redemption would be desirable. There was another subject which the noble Marquess had not touched upon—that was the re-assessment of some portion of titheable lands. It could not be contended that they should persevere in a system with regard to certain lands where the tithe actually swallowed up the whole profit of the land and operated as a confiscation of the whole income of the land. This was no light matter. Surely it was not a mere question of pounds, shillings, and pence, because the result would be that land would go out of cultivation. Great injury would be inflicted in districts where the land ceased to be cultivated. In making these observations, he wished to be understood as reserving his opinion till he saw the Bills; but he felt sure that the desire of his Colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench was to co-operate, as far as possible, with the noble Marquess in the object he had in view.

EARL STANHOPE said, that he was glad the Bills had been brought forward, and hoped that they would be pushed through Parliament as rapidly as possible. The resistance to the payment of tithes in Wales had assumed an acute stage. He was glad, too, that the seven years' averages would be reduced to three years. It would be much more equitable to all parties.

LORD HARLECH said, he agreed that there was a great call for legislation on this question; but, considering the opportunities for obstruction in "another place," he was not sure that the noble Marquess was pursuing a judicious course in dealing with the subject in three Bills. He suggested that it would be more convenient to make one Bill of it divided into three parts, and thereby afford less opportunity for obstruction.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he was of opinion, on the contrary, that to adopt the suggestion of his noble Friend would be to run the risk of destroying the whole of this legislation. The advantage gained by having three Bills was that if two went to the bottom the third might float. The Government hoped, however, to be able to pass all three Bills.

Bill to amend section eighty of the Tithe Rentcharge Act, 1836.—*Presented* (The Marquess of SALISBURY.)

Bill read 1ª. (No. 53.)

Bill to amend the law with respect to the recovery and variation of tithe rentcharge in England.—*Presented* (The Marquess of SALISBURY.)

Bill read 1ª. (No. 54.)

LAND CHARGES REGISTRATION AND SEARCHES BILL.—(No. 40.)

(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD HOBHOUSE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was intended to remove some of the dangers which beset purchasers in the shape of charges upon the purchased land. By the Statute of 1837 judgments had to be registered in the Common Pleas Office; but that had necessitated a number of expensive searches, and in 1860 an Act had been passed to give further security to purchasers, requiring not only the registration of judgments but also that of writs of execution, and that such writs should be enforced within three months. In 1864 another Act was passed to give further protection; but, unfortunately, instead of giving further protection to the purchaser, it took away that which he already had. This miscarriage of the Legislature was found out in the recent case of *Re Pope*, and it created great alarm among purchasers of land and their legal advisers. It necessitated expensive searches, which were simply prohibitory in the case of small purchases. He proposed to require again that no judgment or order should have effect until registered. Another point related to Receivers in Bankruptcy. He was told that, owing to the want of a central office, searches for Receiving orders were enormously expensive and long, and in small purchases were quite prohibited by the cost. He proposed that all charges must be registered in the central registry. A third point dealt with in this Bill was that of the numerous class of Acts passed in late years enabling charges to be made upon the land for drainage and improvements of various kinds. The present system required a large number of different searches, in spite of some consolidation having been effected. They should all be registered in the central office. He thought that everybody must agree with the objects of this Bill. What he now proposed was to ask their Lordships to read it a second time, and then that it should be referred to the same Committee which would sit upon the Land Transfer Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^{a} accordingly.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: I have given the noble Marquess private Notice of a Question upon two points connected with the Conversion Bill upon which it is desired that a public authoritative statement should be made. The two points are these—in the first place, is it to be understood, as provided in the Bill, that trustees are to treat the 5*s.* bonus as income to be paid to the life tenant, or will it be merely optional for them to do so? A distinct provision in the former sense would greatly simplify matters and relieve trustees. Secondly, where a solicitor has to be employed but does not happen to be the "agent" recognized by the Bank as the party entitled to receive the 1*s.* 6*d.* commission, is there anything in the Bill to preclude him from making his usual professional charges?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): Having received private Notice of the Question, I referred it to my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has enabled me to answer it. The Bill authorizes trustees to treat the 5*s.* bonus as interest; but it was not possible to compel them to do so. Strictly the bonus should have been regarded as capital; but in view of the great inconvenience of compelling trustees to reinvest, especially in the case of the smaller holdings, it was thought right to give them the option of treating the bonus as income, and relieve them from responsibility if they so treated it. With regard to the second Question, solicitors, bankers, and brokers will be recognized as agents by the Bank. There is nothing in the Bill to prevent any man receiving his usual professional remuneration. But the commission of 1*s.* 6*d.* was allowed in order to save holders from the necessity of sacrificing a part of their bonus in order to pay such professional remuneration, which the commission itself was provided to supply.

SWEATING SYSTEM.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 50.)

HOUSE OF LORDS (CONSTITUTION) REFORM BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the constitution of the House of Lords—Was *presented* by The Lord Kenry (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl*); read 1^{a}. (No. 51.)

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for extending the right of voting at Parliamentary elections to duly qualified women —Was *presented* by The Lord Denman; read 1^{a}. (No. 52.)

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

HIGH SHERIFFS.

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:—

L. President (*V. Cranbrook*).
E. Stanhope.
E. Camperdown.
L. Clinton.
L. Saye and Sele.
L. Leconfield.
L. Hothfield.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

The Lord KINTORE (*E. Kintore*) chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 23*rd March*, 1888.

MINUTES.] — STANDING COMMITTEES — Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, *nominated*; Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacture, *nominated.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—Customs, Isle of Man.*

Ordered—First Reading—Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * [191].

First Reading—Railway and Canal Traffic * [190].

Second Reading—Westminster Abbey [165]; Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) [92] [House counted out].

Committee — Report — Third Reading — Statute Law Revision * [186], and *passed.*

Third Reading—Army (Annual) * [179]; East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) * [143], and *passed.*

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT).

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure which may by Order of the House be committed to such Standing Committee :—Mr. Tyssen Amherst, Mr. Asquith, Sir G. Baden-Powell, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Beach, Mr. Beadel, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. George Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Commins, Mr. Curzon, Colonel Dawnay, Mr. Dillwyn, Sir John Dorington, Colonel Duncan, Viscount Ebrington, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. John E. Ellis, Mr. Elton, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Claud Hamilton, Sir W. Vernon Harcourt, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Samuel Hoare, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Sir Charles Lewis, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald, Mr. Frederic Maclean, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Madden, Mr. Mahony, Mr. Marum, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Matthews, Mr. John Morley, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Picton, Sir John Puleston, Mr. John E. Redmond, Mr. Russell, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. J. E. Spencer, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Waddy, Sir Richard Webster, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wodehouse, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported* from the said Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacture, which may, by order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee: Mr. Addison, Mr. Asher, Mr. Baring, Mr. Barran, Sir Walter Barttelot, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. J. C. Bolton, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Boord, Mr. A. H. Brown, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Burt, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Henry Chaplin, Mr. Childers, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Colman, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Sir James Corry, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Baron de Worms, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Sir George Elliot, Mr. T. E. Ellis, Mr. R. V. Penrose FitzGerald, Mr. Gilliat, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Grotrian, Mr. A. W. Hall, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Frank Hardcastle, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Heneage, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Howell, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Muntz, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Parnell, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. J. Robertson, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Whitley, Mr. S. Williamson, Mr. C. H. Wilson, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Wood.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND) — COMMUNICATION FROM OBAN TO LOCHMADDY.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Postmaster General, Why the mail communication by steamer from Oban to Lochmaddy has been withdrawn; whether he is aware that great dissatisfaction and inconvenience has arisen in consequence to the people of North Uist; and, whether he can see his way to restore the communication, which had only been obtained a year ago after much solicitation?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): With a view to give effect to wishes frequently expressed, a mail packet was recently established between Portree and Dunvegan, calling at Lochmaddy in both directions, and affording to Lochmaddy every day of the week, Sunday excepted, a convenient means of communicating with the mainland *viâ* Strome Ferry. It is in these circumstances that the continuance of the mail communication by steamer from Lochmaddy *viâ* Oban (which had been afforded under very different circumstances) did not appear to the Government to be justified; and I regret that I can hold out no prospect of its restoration.

TRUCK ACTS (SCOTLAND)—DUNFERMLINE COAL COMPANY.

MR. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to an alleged breach of the Truck Acts by the Dunfermline Coal Company in February last; whether the complaint set forth a *primâ facie* case of breach of these Acts, such as would lead to a conviction if the facts were proved; and, whether he will communicate with the Procurator Fiscal, with a view to a reconsideration of his refusal to institute proceedings in reference thereto?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention has been called to this question, and I have made some inquiry, from which it appears that the Procurator Fiscal did not consider there was a *primâ facie* case made out on the information which was laid before him; and I am informed that, the case being a difficult one, he consulted the Sheriff Substitute, who agreed with this view, and thought he should not interfere. It appears to be a question of some doubt and intricacy; and I shall go into the matter more fully, and consider whether proceedings should not be instituted.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—LOANS.

MR. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the loan sanctioned by the Land Commissioners under "The Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1885," amounted to over £3,600,000, while only about £2,000,000 has been paid to the vendors; what is the cause of the delay which has taken place in the issue of the loans; and, whether interest will be credited to the vendors from the dates at which the loans were sanctioned?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The figures are substantially as quoted in the Question. The Land Purchase Commissioners inform me that loans are provisionally sanctioned as soon as the Commissioners are satisfied as to the security; but it is, of course, impossible to pay over the purchase money until the vendors have proved their titles and executed the necessary conveyances. Every possible facility is afforded them for this purpose; but the greater or less expedition must necessarily depend on the nature of their titles, and on the energy of their solicitors in prosecuting the proceedings. The Commissioners have no power to allow interest on purchase money agreed to be advanced; but in cases where proceedings are likely to be protracted, landlords, by availing themselves of the provisions of the 14th section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, may, by the investment of the purchase money, secure interest upon it pending the necessary legal investigations. They may also, by their agreements for sale, provide for the payment of interest by tenants pending the completion of the sale. It is expected that over £200,000 will be issued in the present month.

VACCINATION ACT—MR. LESLIE CREERY, CLERK TO THE EAST ASHFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Mr. Leslie Creery, who, as Clerk to the East Ashford Board of Guardians, advises the Board to prosecute offenders against the Vaccination Act, is the same Mr. Leslie Creery who, as Clerk to the East Ashford Magistrates, advises the Bench as to what fines and costs should be inflicted on them; if so, whether it is in conformity with the Regulations of the Local Government Board that the legal adviser to the prosecutors should also be legal adviser to the magistrates; and, whether, in his capacity as clerk to the magistrates, he receives a portion of the costs of each of the cases, such as for summonses, and copies, administering oaths, &c. which, in his capacity as Clerk to the Guardians, he has advised should be prosecuted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: Mr. Creery is both Clerk to the East Ashford Board of Guardians and also Clerk to the Justices of the Division. The Local Government Board Regulations do not deal with the point of both these appointments being held by the same officer. I am informed by Mr. Creery that in his capacity as Clerk to the Justices he receives the costs and fees payable on all convictions; but they are at once credited to the County Authority, as he is, and has been for some time, paid by a fixed salary.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SCHEMES OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Committee of Council on Education have now before them any Schemes of the Charity Commissioners involving the alteration of Trusts of any Charities; and, if so, whether he will state the names of the Charities and the places to which they belong; the volume and page of the Charity Commissioners Reports in which the original Trusts are given; and, the amount of property and income approximately with which it is proposed to deal?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): All Schemes of the Charity Commissioners which are before the Education Department are submitted to that Department under the provisions of the Endowed School Acts; and all those Schemes provide, in accordance with Section 9 of the Act, 1869, for the alteration of the existing Trusts of the Endowments dealt with. The information asked as to names, places, and amounts of income is from time to time, stated in the Appendix to the Annual Reports of the Commissioners. The Report for 1887 has been forwarded to the Home Office for presentation to Her Majesty, and will shortly be laid on the Table of the House. The information thus given removes all difficulty in referring in any particular case to the original Reports of the Commissioners of Charity (1818-37), which Reports are fully indexed. I will consider the possibility of giving an earlier publicity to the Scheme of the Commissioners in the localities affected.

GENERAL CATTLE DISEASES FUND—INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the total amount of the income of the General Cattle Diseases Fund since the passing of the Contagious Diseases Animals Act in 1878, and what is the balance (if any) now to the credit of that Fund; what was the amount in the £1 assessed by the Local Government Board under the Contagious Diseases Animals Act, on the various Unions in Ireland, and the dates upon which said assessments were paid; and, whether, since, as directed by the recent Order in Council, steps are about being taken to stamp out pleuro-pneumonia in the Dublin District, by the compulsory slaughter of all cattle that have been in any way, however remotely, exposed to contagion, and as such compulsory slaughter will benefit the cattle trade not of Dublin alone, but of the entire country, it is the intention of the Irish Government to take advantage of section 83, sub-section 8, of the Act of 1878, to increase the poundage rate throughout the entire of Ireland to an extent under said sub-section sufficient to meet the claims for compensation arising out of the compulsory slaughter of healthy animals?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The total amount received into the General Cattle Diseases Fund since the passing of the Act in 1878 has been £92,648 6*s.* 2¾*d.* The balance to the credit of the Fund on the 1st of the present month amounted to £9,168 10*s.* 4*d.* The assessments referred to have been on each occasion ¼*d.* in the £1. The dates on which they were made are as follow:—December 24, 1879, February 3, 1881, June 19, 1882, December 13, 1883, July 22, 1885, and May 27, 1887—averaging about £14,300 each levy. Pleuro-pneumonia has been practically confined to the Dublin District for a very considerable period; and there can be no doubt that the continued and continuous existence of the disease in the Dublin dairy-yards is due mainly to their insanitary condition and the manner in which the cattle kept in them are housed and fed, and to concealment of disease from the proper authorities. Under these circumstances, it would be manifestly unfair to tax the whole of Ireland to meet cases for compensation in the Dublin District on an equal scale with the ratepayers of the affected Unions. The Government, however, recognize that the recent Order, while absolutely necessary, may press severely on the rates of the Dublin Unions if their resources are at once called upon to meet all the cases for compensation; and they are considering a scheme by which assistance may be given to the districts mainly affected by the Order in the event of its provisions being promptly obeyed and carried out.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND)—GRANTS IN AID.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for Mr. O'DOHERTY) (Donegal, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What proportion the annual amount raised by county cess, borough rate, and other town rates bears to the total amount raised by local taxation in Ireland; are any grants in aid of such county cess and town rates made from the Imperial Exchequer; and, why are the cesspayers practically excluded from such relief in aid?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): According to the last Return, the total amount raised by local rates in Ireland is £2,797,451, and the county cess, borough rate, and other town rates amount to £1,760,125, or 63 per cent of the whole. The grant for the maintenance of pauper lunatics goes in aid of the county cess. It amounts to about £105,000. The counties also benefit by the cost of prosecutors and witnesses in Crown cases, which were formally provided for by presentment, being now borne by the Imperial Exchequer and by a small grant made to certain public infirmaries. But these are not, strictly speaking, grants in aid of the county cess. In the same way in towns in which the Commissioners are Urban Sanitary Authorities half the cost of the sanitary officers' salaries is borne by the Government; but it is the poor rates which are relieved by this, rather than the town rates proper. I think I may take the hon. Member's Question as indicating his wish that any further relief given to local rates in Ireland should be applied in aid of the county cess and town rates. I cannot, of course, make any promise now; but I note his wish.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—PARCEL POST—SUNDAY WORK.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the officers of the Parcel Post in Dublin are at present obliged to work for eight hours every alternate Sunday without any extra pay, and are only paid for every hour they are on duty after the first eight hours; whether, when the Parcel Post was established in 1883, the then Postmaster General gave an undertaking that no Sunday duty would be expected from the officers engaged in that service; and, whether, having regard to the fact that in London the Parcel Post officers are paid for every hour they are on duty on Sundays, the officers in the Irish Department will be placed on the same footing?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, he had put himself in communication with the Department; and as soon as he had received the desired information he would answer the Question of the hon. Member.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Star* newspaper on the 21st of March, 1888, that—

> "On the 31st of December, 1886, five men and one girl were brought before the Alnwick Bench of Magistrates, for having brought off the beach some pieces of timber,"

and were fined—

> "£3, odd, each, with the alternative of one month each in gaol for the men, and 14 days for the girl;"

whether the girl was taken to gaol on Saturday last, and those of the men who have not paid the fine are also "threatened" with imprisonment; whether the timber was washed in with the tide, and practically valueless; and, whether he can state the reason why the policeman refused the "offer of the men to go to gaol."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am imformed by the Clerk to the Alnwick Justices that five men and a girl were convicted on the 22nd of December, 1886, for having in their possession timber which had been jettisoned from a stranded vessel, and had been salved by the fishermen and stacked on the shore. The statutory penalty for this offence is £20, or six months' imprisonment. Four men were fined £2; one man and the girl 10*s.*; the alternative being a month and a fortnight's imprisonment respectively. Time for payment was given in each case. On the 10th of this month, three of the men only having paid, the Justices issued commitments against the rest. The girl paid on the 17th instant. The timber was not valueless; two of the pieces found in the possession of one of the defendants were valued at 4*s.* 2*d.*, and four pieces in the possession of another defendant were valued at 6*s.* 10*d.* The Justices did not wish to send the men to prison if they could help it.

MR. FENWICK asked, whether it was not true that the men, during the time of the trade dispute to which the right hon. Gentleman had just referred, said that they could not pay the fine, but offered to serve their term of imprisonment during the trade dispute; whether their offer to go to prison was not refused by the policeman; whether they did not offer to pay the amount of the fine by instalments; and whether that offer was also refused? He also asked the right hon. Gentleman to state why the sentence was deferred for such a length of time?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I can only answer the last part of the Question. I understand the Justices to say that the payment was deferred from time to time, and that the Justices were unwilling to send them to prison, inasmuch as the men were out on strike, and unable to earn wages. Time was given on five occasions, until ultimately three of the men paid; and the Justices thought it was unfair to those three if proceedings were not taken against the others.

MR. FENWICK said, the men told the policeman that they were unable to pay, and that they preferred to go to prison during the time of the trade dispute. Afterwards, when the men were in employment, they took them from their homes when they had offered to pay the amount of the fines by instalments.

MR. MATTHEWS: If the hon. Member will give me particulars, I will make inquiries on the subject.

MR. FENWICK gave Notice that he would repeat his Question, and would also ask the right hon. Gentleman to state further why the offer of the men was refused.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD ACTS—AMERICAN REFINED LARD.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by George H. Webster, of Chicago, before the Committee at Washington, as reported in *The Chicago Tribune;* whether it is the case that the American so-called refined lard is composed of about 60 per cent of lard, 25 per cent of cotton seed oil, and 15 per cent of beef fats, and the mixture is stiffened with lard stearine; whether the manufacturers of lard in America use about $4,000,000 worth of cotton seed oil, and about $2,000,000 worth of beef fats; whether a large portion of this adulterated lard is sold as a food in this country under the name of refined lard; and, whether the present Acts against adulteration will meet this case?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have not received a copy of *The Chicago Tribune*, referred to by the hon. Member; but they have official information as to the extensive use of cotton seed oil in the United States in the manufacture of lard. The substance of this information was published in *The Board of Trade Journal* for March. How far this adulterated lard is sold in the United Kingdom as food it would be impossible to say; but lard is imported in considerable quantities from the United States. As to how far existing Acts against adulteration will meet such a case, I am not in a position to give an authoritative opinion; but it would, no doubt, be contrary to the object of these Acts to sell an adulterated importation as genuine lard of home production.

LOTTERIES ACTS—WILLIAM STREET REFORM CLUB, DARWEN.

MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a lottery announced to be held on behalf of the William Street Reform Club, Darwen, on which occasion prizes consisting of a piano, a gold watch, and other articles are to be drawn; and, what steps he proposes to take in reference to the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have not received any information with regard to this lottery. The local police can prosecute if there is a sufficient case; and I do not propose to interfere.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—FELLOWSHIP IN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any appointment has yet been made by the Senate of the Royal University of Ireland to the vacant Fellowship in Natural Philosophy caused by the resignation of the Very Rev. G. Molloy; and, whether he can state the date of his resignation, and the cause of the delay in making the new appointment?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Senate of the Royal University informs me that the Very Rev. G. Molloy resigned his Fellowship as from the 18th of April, 1887. They have postponed filling the vacancy, pending their decision in regard to the conditions of appointment and tenure of Fellowships which they have had under consideration.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE VOLUNTEER PERMANENT STAFF—PLAIN DRESS OFF DUTY.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, Why it has been decided to withdraw from the Permanent Staff serving with the Volunteers the privilege of wearing plain clothes when not on duty, which they have hitherto enjoyed; whether Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps have been asked their opinion on the matter; and, whether, as a fact, the majority of Commanding Officers have exercised the discretion given them under "Army Order 84, 1st March, 1888," par. 474 (a.) to permit Sergeant Instructors to wear plain clothes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Members of the Permanent Staff of Volunteer corps serving on their Line engagement are soldiers of the Regular Army, and, as such, bound to appear in uniform. The matter is one of Army discipline, and would not be referred for the opinion of Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps. As, however, the circumstances under which Sergeant Instructors serve are sometimes peculiar, a discretion has been given to General Officers commanding Districts (but not to the Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps, as stated in my hon. Friend's Question) to allow, when expedient, a dispensation from the strict Rule.

DISTURBANCES (METROPOLIS), NOVEMBER 20—ACTION OF THE POLICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will institute an inquiry into the truth, or otherwise, of the following statement made by Mr. William Smith, bath attendant, 51, Lever Street, Goswell Road, E.C.:—

> "On Sunday afternoon, 20th November, 1887, about 3 o'clock, I was in a procession proceeding along Holborn to Hyde Park. As the procession approached Southampton Street, I saw a cordon of police drawn right across the roadway of Holborn. When the procession was from 20 to 30 yards from the police, the latter, without any notice or warning, ran towards the procession with their truncheons drawn. Before I had time to get out of the way, I was knocked down by a policeman with his fist. I was struck on the nose and mouth; three of my teeth were knocked out. I got up, and was immediately knocked down again by a blow from a policeman's baton over the right eye."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): If Mr. Smith will make his statements not through the hon. Member in this House, but to a magistrate or to the Commissioner of Police, they will be duly inquired into. I am informed that there is no record of his having made any complaint.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL—TRUSTEES OF MARRIAGE SETTLEMENTS.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has considered how (if the Conversion Scheme is carried) performance is possible in the case of a covenant in a marriage settlement to transfer to the Trustees thereof, for benefit of the younger children within three months after covenanter's death, £50,000 Bank Three per Cent Annuities?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the hon. Member will find that the case he puts is met by a sub-section inserted in the Bill on Tuesday last, which provides that—

> "In any Act passed or instrument executed before the passing of this Act references to any stock liable to be converted or exchanged in pursuance of this Act may, if the stock is so converted or exchanged, be construed as references to new stock."

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—SHERIFF CLERKSHIP OF FORFARSHIRE.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Sheriff Clerkship of Forfarshire has been filled up by the appointment of a gentleman holding the office of Clerk to the Justices of the Peace; and, if so, whether it is intended that he shall hold both offices?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I answer the first part of the Question Yes, and the second No.

CRIMINAL LAW—EXECUTIONS AT HEREFORD—THE EXECUTIONER.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE (Worcestershire, Bewdley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of James Berry, the executioner employed to hang two men at Hereford on the 20th of March last, who is reported in the local papers to have been

> "Fêted at a smoking concert at one of the hotels in Hereford on the evening preceding the execution, Berry himself being a performer;"

and, whether, if such a report be true, he will take steps to prevent the repetition of such proceedings on the part of the officer charged with the duty of carrying into effect the extreme penalty of the law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen a report in the local papers to the effect stated in the Question. The hon. Baronet is aware that the executioner is appointed by the Sheriff; and neither the Prison Commissioners nor the Secretary of State have any control over him or his movements. In 1885 the Governors of Prisons were instructed by the Secretary of State to inform the Sheriff that it was desirable that the executioner should be required to reside and sleep in the prison. I will consider whether, by additional instructions, I can prevent a repetition of such proceedings as the hon. Baronet has referred to.

WAR OFFICE—THE ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the War Office to prolong the period of foreign service for officers of the Army Medical Staff; and, whether, in the event of such an event taking place, any compensation will be given for the increased risk?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The length of the term of foreign service will be extended by one year in all departments in the interests of economy, and for the purpose of lengthening the period of service at home. As the service of an officer is available wherever Her Majesty may require it, no case for compensation arises.

IRELAND—DESTITUTION IN ARRAN.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secreeary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received any Reports from magistrates or others as to the destitution occasioned on the shallow soil of Arran by the past dry season; and, what measures have been undertaken by the Government to give seed potatoes or other relief to the Islanders?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government have received Reports on the present condition of the Arran Islanders, which appears to be mainly due to a failure of the potato crop last year. They have arranged for the distribution of seed potatoes; but a difficulty has arisen in regard to obtaining a suitable time. A private Relief Committee has been also formed, who are about to furnish the Islanders with a supply of potatoes for current consumption.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION, CO. DOWN—FAIR RENTS—DECISION OF MR. E. GREER, ANTRIM.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a decision of Mr. Edward Greer, Chairman of the County Down Sub - Commission, delivered at Antrim on Monday last, whereby he dismissed the fair rent application of a leaseholder, named Edward Nelson, who is a tenant on the estate of Sir Richard Wallace; whether Mr. Greer held, on the authority of "Donoughmore *v.* Forrest," that the assignee of a lease which contains a clause against alienation, even though he had been accepted as tenant by the landlord many years ago, is not entitled to the privileges of the Land Act of 1887 unless the lessor or landlord had, by endorsement in writing, consented to the alienation; whether it is a fact that upwards of 75 per cent of the agricultural leases in Ulster contain covenants against alienation, and that the practice generally followed on the assignment of leaseholds there was merely to enter the name of the assignee in the rent-book as the new tenant, and give him the rent receipts in his own name; whether he is aware that, if this narrow interpretation be put on the word "lessee" in "The Irish Land Act, 1887," more than half of the leaseholders in Ulster will be debarred from having fair rents fixed; and, whether, considering the importance of the subject, and the danger with which these leaseholders are threatened, the Government will take steps to have the benefit of the fair rent clause secured to all the leaseholders to whom it was intended to apply?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): The Question of the hon. Member only appeared on the Paper this morning, and I, therefore, have been unable to obtain the necessary information as to the decision referred to in the Question. All I can say at present is, that I quite agree with the hon. Member as to the importance of the subject; and I shall take care to ascertain the grounds of the decision referred to, and consider them with reference to the working of the Act of last year.

Mr. DILLON: I shall repeat the Question after Easter.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

Mr. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can say when the second reading of the Employers' Liability Bill will be taken?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that, in regard to the second reading, he wished to consult the convenience of the hon. Member and others who took an interest in the Bill. If the hon. Member would communicate with him on the subject, he would fix the second reading for a day generally acceptable.

BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE—CONTRACTS WITH DE LA RUE & CO.

Mr. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the contracts entered into by the Board of Inland Revenue in 1880 with the firm of De la Rue and Company, Whether he has called upon the Board of Inland Revenue for any explanation of the circumstances under which those contracts were made?

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) also asked, Whether the Inland Revenue Department itself had made any contract with Messrs. De La Rue & Co. for the supply of its own Department?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I did not call upon the Board of Inland Revenue for such an explanation, for they at once communicated with the Treasury on the subject, and inclosed a copy of a Minute drawn up and signed by Sir Charles Herries, who, in 1880, was Chairman of the Board, in which the circumstances under which the arrangements with Messrs. De La Rue were concluded are fully detailed. I propose to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the communication of the Board of Inland Revenue and of its inclosure. I may add that the Board—though they do not by any means accept the figures given by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General as correct, and I did not understand him to have any authentic information on the subject—have long been aware that, owing to the fall in prices and improved processes of production, it is tolerably certain that when the contract expires in 1890 considerable savings will be effected.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS, CO. DOWN.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the new arrangements to be made in order to expedite the hearing of fair rent applications in the County of Down, Whether he can now state what those arrangements are?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: As has been already stated within the past few days, the Government are anxiously considering the question of the arrears in cases awaiting a hearing to have fair rents fixed in Ireland. They are not at present in a position to state what steps the Land Commissioners will take as regards individual counties; but they must manifestly be guided by considerations of the general claims of the public.

Mr. M'CARTAN: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman state when he will be in a position to give us the information?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; I am afraid I cannot give the date.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COMMISSION—TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has ascertained what are the intentions of the Elementary Education Commission as to presenting a preliminary Report on Technical Education; and, whether they intend to present such a Report?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): No, Sir; I have not been able to ascertain what are the intentions of the Elementary Education Commission as to presenting a Report on Technical Education.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) (a Member of the Commission) said, he might be allowed to state that the Commission had considered the question on the preceding day, and had decided not to make a preliminary Report for the present.

JOINT STOCK LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES—INVESTMENTS.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can state approximately the total sum which has been invested in Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies since the passage of the Act of 1862?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have no information which would enable me to state, even approximately, what sum has been invested in Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies since the Act of 1862.

FINANCE, &c.—SURPLUSES OF CIVIL LIST CLASSES.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is now any objection of a public character to laying upon the Table of the House a Copy of such Directions as may have been made from time to time by the Lord High Treasurer or Commissioners of the Treasury, in conformity with the provisions of 1 *Vict.* c. 2, s. 9, with reference to any savings or surplus on any of the Classes of the Civil List, that at the end of each year it shall be lawful for the Lord High Treasurer or Commissioners of the Treasury for the time being, or any three or more of them, to direct the same to be applied in aid of the charges or expenses of any other Class (except the Fifth Class), or of any charge or charges upon Her Majesty's Civil List Revenues, in such manner as may, under the circumstances, appear to be most expedient?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I can hold out no hope of laying upon the Table any directions issued by the Treasury in regard to the savings on the Civil List. The arrangement between the Crown and Parliament is that the Civil List is only brought under the review of the House—(1) when there has been an excess on the expenditure; (2) on the demise of the Sovereign; or (3) when an application is made for a provision in excess of the amount fixed. None of these circumstances at present exist, and the question is not, therefore, one with which the House can deal. I would remind the hon. Member that on the 19th of March, 1872, a similar question was brought before the House by Sir Charles Dilke. The Return was refused by the Government of the day, and after debate the view of the Government was supported by an overwhelming majority. The 1 *Vict.* c. 2, s. 9, is to the effect that the Treasury may direct savings in any Class of the Civil List to be applied at the end of the year in aid of any other Classes (except the Fifth Class, Pensions), or of any charge on Civil List Revenues, in such manner as may, under the circumstances, be most expedient.

MR. E. ROBERTSON asked whether the refusal of the House was not due rather to a speech made just before by Sir Charles Dilke at Newcastle?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It may be so; but I have no information on the matter.

RAILWAYS AND DEEP SEA FISHERY HARBOURS (IRELAND).

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Government intend to propose measures to give effect to the recommendation of the Royal Commission appointed by the present Government to consider the question of an extension of railways and of deep sea fishery harbours in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Commissioners themselves settled the order in which they should deal with the questions referred to them, and selected the drainage question as the one which was most urgent. Her Majesty's Government are pushing forward the steps necessary for giving effect to the drainage part of the Commissioners' Report; but they are not prepared to deal with the further questions of extension of railways and deep sea fishery harbours, both of which involve large financial arrangements, and both of which will require legislation, till they have had more time to consider the matter.

COLONEL NOLAN: Do the Government intend to deal with the matter this Session?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not yet able to say; but I hope to be able to inform the hon. and gallant Gentleman after Easter.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE WEXFORD UNION.

MR. J. BARRY (Wexford, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Has his attention been called to the Resolution of the Guardians of Wexford Union, passed on Saturday last, as follows:—

> "That we are greatly disappointed at the action of the Land Commissioners in only setting down 137 cases for hearing in this Union at the forthcoming Sub-Commission; whereas we understand that nearly 1,000 applications from this Union to fix fair rents were made before the 1st of November, 1887;"

and, when do the Government hope to announce their intention as to strengthening the Land Commissions?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): My attention has only been drawn to the Resolution of the Guardians of Wexford Union by the Question of the hon. Member. Her Majesty's Government will do what they can to hasten the hearing of the applications to fix fair rents.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, this was about the 40th time that the right hon. Gentleman had promised that. He asked, would the right hon. Gentleman now give them some definite idea as to whether the Government in Ireland were waiting until the tenants' six months' period of redemption ran out, when their last chance of benefiting by the Land Act of the past year would be gone before taking steps in the matter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly aware of the difficulty. He knows that it is not such an easy and simple matter as it looks to increase the strength of the Land Commission to the extent that is necessary. The Government fully recognize the importance and urgency of the matter, and they are doing their best to press it forward.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state, in view of the fact that four months have now elapsed since something over 40,000 cases have been put into the Land Court, and that they have done nothing to meet the emergency, when they will be able to do something?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, will he be kind enough to state for the information of those who are interested in this question—and they include every Member representing an agricultural constituency in Ireland—whether he can give the information required before the House adjourns for Easter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I really do not know what answer the hon. Member expects beyond that which I have already given—namely, that I am doing all I can to press on the matter. That, surely, ought to satisfy the hon. Member.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us some indication of what are the difficulties standing in his way? Is it that there are not a sufficient number of applicants for Sub-Commissionerships?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: In order to avoid attention being called to the subject by a Motion for the adjournment of the House, will the right hon. Gentleman state whether there are any more difficulties in the way of the present Government than existed in 1881, when means were immediately taken, after the passing of the Land Act of that year, to appoint a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners; and, whether there were not more applications in 1881 than there are now in 1888; and what are the difficulties which the Government experience?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Obviously, I cannot answer the hon. and learned Gentleman's Question as to what was done in 1881 without Notice; but I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that there are necessarily difficulties in the matter. There are Treasury difficulties, and there are difficulties in appointing the necessary Sub-Commissioners—if, indeed, the method to be adopted by the Government necessarily consists of appointing extra Sub-Commissioners. But I am desirous, if I can, of finding some other method than that, and that necessarily causes delay.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

In reply to Mr. Mundella (Sheffield, Brightside),

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.), said, his object in putting down the Bill for the 5th of April was that he should then be able to name a day for the second reading. He was anxious to take the second reading as soon as possible, in order that the Bill might be referred to a Grand Committee.

INDIA—THE SIKKIM EXPEDITION.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any news had been received to-day from Sikkim?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): I am happy to be able to inform the House that a telegram received this morning from the Viceroy at Calcutta states that—

> "The Lingtu Fort has been occupied without resistance; garrison has fled; fort now being demolished."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton), in rising to call attention to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions, and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the said Committee; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,"

said, that the subject divided itself into two heads, of which the first—namely, that relating to perpetual pensions—had now become of comparatively minor importance, for since the matter was first raised in the House a large number of perpetual pensions had disappeared by commutation. The second portion of the Motion was not only very much the more important, but was also much the more difficult, because on the first he was fortified in the action he now took by the unanimous Report of the Select Committee, on which the Government's own Attorney General sat; on the second — though he could easily point out the evil—he did not pretend he could be as clear as to what the proper remedy for the evil was. It might be—though he hoped it would not be—that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) would think that he had a right to complain that in the second part of the Motion he was trespassing on the ground he was attempting. If he did, he should plead as an excuse that in one of the noble Lord's speeches during the vacation he held out to him an inducement to take the matter up in the House. He would now refer to the Report of the Select Committee, in which they were unanimous, although the Radical element in the Committee was in a perfectly small minority. The Committee reported—

> "That pensions, allowances, and payments ought not in future to be granted in perpetuity, on the ground that all such grants should be limited to the persons actually rendering the services intended to be rewarded by such grants, and that such rewards should be wholly or in main part defrayed by the generations benefited by the services so recognized. That it is unjust that future generations should be burdened with payments to persons who have had no share in the original services. That offices with salaries and without duties, or with merely nominal duties, should be abolished. That all existing perpetual pensions, allowances, and payments, and all hereditary offices should be determined and abolished. That in all such commutations the Lords of the Treasury should take into consideration the circumstances of such pension, allowance, or payment, and whether or not any real service had been rendered by the original grantee or was now performed by the actual holder of the office."

The Committee further reported—

> "That in all cases the method of commutation ought to involve and insure a real and substantial saving to the nation."

He now asked the House to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee, and in doing so he trusted that he should be fortunate enough not to raise any kind of Party feeling, and that he should win the consent of the Government to carry out the recommendations of a Committee of which their own Attorney General was a Member. There now remained uncommuted 76 perpetual pensions, involving an annual payment of between £60,000 and £70,000, and they varied from £19,000 a-year to £1 and a few shillings a-year. He, however, proposed to deal on this occasion with only two, one relating to the Duchy of Cornwall and one relating to the Duchy of Lancaster. With regard to the former, amounting to £16,216, it appeared that it was granted in 1838 to the Duchy of Cornwall for the loss of the annual revenue of £11,536 derived from tin coinage duties, post groats, and white rents. It appeared, however, that for the 10 years preceding the 1st of October, 1838, the Duchy of Cornwall had only received £10 per annum in respect of these post groats. By a Treasury Minute dated 1839, it was stated that His Majesty King William IV. had expressed his intention that the post groats in Cornwall should cease after the 5th of April, 1841, on the termination of the existing lease, and that Her present Majesty on her accession had been pleased to confirm such intentions, and that, therefore, it did not appear to the Lords of the Treasury that the sum of £630 14*s.* 2*d.* should be provided for beyond the 5th of April, 1841, and that the compensation should be diminished after that date. It would, therefore, appear that a perpetual pension of £16,216 had been granted in respect of the loss of the annual sum of £11,300, and that a part of the former sum consisted of the annual sum of £630 14*s.* 2*d.* granted in respect of the loss of an annual sum of £10. The annual payment of this sum of £630 14*s.* 2*d.* had, however, been continued ever since 1841 without any legal authority and by what might be termed the quiet connivance of the Treasury. It was a monstrous thing that such an unjustifiable payment should continue. He also asked the House to take into consideration the payment of £800 per annum to the Duchy of Lancaster for "butlerage" and "prisage." Prisage was the right which the King had by ancient prescription of taking to his own use and at his own valuation as much of all merchandize belonging to merchant strangers out of every ship importing the same as he had occasion for. A perpetual pension in consideration of this "butlerage" and "prisage" had been granted to the Duke of Grafton. It had been sometimes said that the whole question of perpetual pensions was a small one, but if the whole amount which had been paid in respect of all the existing and the commuted perpetual pensions had been invested at compound interest the nation would not only have been able to pay off the National Debt, but would have had several hundreds of millions of money in hand. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) further found that an annual payment of £100 10*s.* 10*d.* had been commuted for the sum of £2,700. The original sum was the aggregate amount which suitors had to pay to their Earls on going to the County Courts in the time of Henry III. He would not, however, trouble the House further with perpetual pensions, but would proceed to other points raised in the Report. In coming to the general Pension List he (Mr. Bradlaugh) fully admitted that, in whichever way they dealt with the question, huge difficulties stared them in the face. He believed that Parliament had already on one or two occasions tried to deal with the subject but had failed, and he imagined there was no logical way out of the difficulty except one in which he did not think the House—not even his Radical friends—would hardly support him. This solution was in the direction of the view advocated by Joseph Hume, that no servant of the State ought to receive a pension for services rendered to the State unless he was injured in its service. Joseph Hume also held that the servant of the State ought to be compelled, by the ordinary consideration which impelled every human being struggling for existence, to provide by his own thrift and economy against a time when he could no longer work and when sickness came upon him. He submitted that the sum for pensions of nearly £7,000,000 sterling, which was constantly growing, despite commutations, would grow to such a degree that in hard times the House would find that it was one of the matters which would call forth the loudest denunciations of the people in their misery. He would mention some of the suggestions which had been made to deal with this question rather than venture to propose any special remedy of his own. Perhaps one of the ablest compositions on this subject was a Memorandum by Sir Robert Hamilton, to be found in the appendix of the Report of the Civil Service Commission. There was a point raised in that Memorandum which was often raised in conversation—namely, all the servants of the State were in a different position from ordinary *employés*, and ought, therefore, to be differently dealt with. But they did not superannuate or pension all servants on length of service or for sickness. There was an excellent class of public servants known as "temporary" Civil servants. Although most of them had been over 25 years, some of them 30 years in the Service, none of them were entitled to any kind of superannuation because they happened to be called "temporary" Civil servants. Sir Robert Hamilton said that superannuation could not be defended as a charitable institution, but it could be defended on the ground that it was a means of procuring cheaper service and keeping down the amount of the salaries. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) maintained, however, that the experience of the last 30 years showed that the statement was not true. —that the system of pensions kept down salaries. Compared with the general service through the State he urged that they did not get such services cheaper; they often paid more for, and got less out of their servants than any other employer. The present system of pensions was demoralizing to the age, discouraged industry and thrift, and was an incentive to idleness. It was a condition of employment demoralizing to the employed. Being assured in their position, and with the knowledge that they would have a pension at a certain period, Civil servants were disposed to do as little work as they possibly could, especially some of those who filled the higher grades of Departments. With reference to the Army pensions he would only select one or two of the most remarkable instances which came to his notice lately. One was that of a gentleman who died last week in Westmoreland. He was held in such high respect in the neighbourhood that the local paper which announced his death appeared with mourning borders. The gentleman had filled the office of Clerk of the Peace, and, indeed, of almost everything official in the district where he lived. In addition to the emoluments he received from these offices, he had drawn a military half-pay for over 70 years. At 12 years of age he became an officer in the Army. In 1815 he started to join in the war, but the war ceased while he was in the course of his journey; and from 1815 to the day of his death last week this gentleman had drawn a military pension for services he had never rendered. What was the use of going through the farce of the House holding the purse strings of the nation, if it held them so lightly? There were a very large number of cases of this kind. The Civil Service Commission pointed out that in the re-organization of the Accountant General's Department of the Admiralty in 1877 the numbers of the staff were 259, costing £70,562. In 1881 the numbers were 245, and the cost £55,885; in 1885 the numbers were 267, and the cost £61,324, although pensions to the amount of £20,097 a-year and bonuses of £51,299 had been granted on re-organization that were supposed to reduce this kind of thing. He again asked the House what was the use of placing Estimates on the Table, criticizing them, and moving reductions of a few sums, if this National burden was to go on constantly swelling? Those burdens were considered to press most severely on labour in this country; every pension reduced the purchasing power of the wage-earner's wages. As a further example of the abuse of pensions, he would remind the House that some time ago he put a Question to the Secretary of the Treasury with regard to a gentleman who was receiving a pension up to the age of 137 years, at least that was what the official records stated, and he, of course, relied on them. That gentleman came into his pension at the age of 68, and at the time he retired he was page to the Princess Charlotte of Wales. They could thus prove by a sum in arithmetic that the enjoyment of a pension beat Old Parr's Life Pills altogether as a means of prolonging human life. There would be no hardship in abolishing pensions in the Government Services. They were not paid in any merchant's office. There the *employés*, by means of life insurance, sick and provident societies and thrift, made provision for old age and incapacity; but by the system of pensions the moral obligations of a whole class of persons who came upon the bounty of the State were destroyed. He hoped the Government would not oppose the Motion. He had not ventured to commit them to the course they should adopt with reference to pensions generally; but he thought there must be enough material to warrant that a small and strong Committee should be appointed to endeavour to find the most reasonable way out of the difficulty. He would leave the question of perpetual pensions to the absolutely unanimous Report of the Committee on the subject. He asked hon. Members who had Notices of Motion on the Paper in regard to the employment of the unemployed to join with him in doing that which would render the condition of the employed better, and would lessen the burdens which fell upon all industry. The country looked to that reformed Parliament to do something like justice in that matter, without regard to politics. These should not be Party questions. There was one class of pensions for which he could find no defence, though he had tried—he meant those mentioned at pages 51 and 52 in the accounts for the year under the heading of political and diplomatic pensions. They seemed to him to have less justification than any others. The noblemen and gentlemen mentioned in the pages to which he referred were, in the belief of the people, out of the need of such pensions. They seemed to rest on less justification than any others. He did not say that they had a right to go back on those pensions which had been already granted; but he asked the House to come to the decision, on the Report of some such Committee as he suggested, that they would not make their professions of economy unreal, but would make them practical, and that they would sweep their own doorsteps first. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport), in seconding the Resolution, said, that the junior Member for Northampton had rendered good service for some years past in endeavouring to call the attention of the country to the abuses of the pension system. No doubt, there were many instances in which perpetual pensions were given for distinguished services in the Army and Navy; but in the majority of cases those pensions were such as the country ought never to have been saddled with. In some instances the money had not been paid, and was not even now paid to descendants of the persons to whom the pensions were originally granted, a pension having been bought and sold in the market more than once, and nobody was able to explain the reason for which it had been given. The case of the Penn pension was a scandalous and notorious one. William Penn never rendered any services to this country, and had no claim upon it; he was simply compensated by the State of Pennsylvania for any losses he had sustained. Yet down to 1884 £4,000 a-year was paid on account of that pension, and then, to complete the transaction, £107,000 was paid for its commutation. Thus close on £500,000 was wrung from the British taxpayer, and paid to persons who were not even descendants of the man to whom the pension was originally granted, and who himself never had any claim on the nation. That was one of the most extraordinary jobs to be found in the political history of the country. Again, many years ago, there was a Mr. Heneage, who held the office of Hereditary Grand Proclamator and Usher with a salary of £588 a-year. No doubt, the duties of the office were entirely visionary, though the salary was tolerably substantial. That case became so glaring that the post was abolished, but the salary was transmitted to the descendants of the Chief Proclamator. The claim was ultimately commuted for £15,852, the whole affair being from first to last nothing less than an outrage on the people of this country. As the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had stated, most of those pensions had been commuted; but, unfortunately, one of the most scandalous of the whole still remained on the list—that of the so-called Master of the Hawks. It was conferred 200 years ago on one of the sons of Nell Gwynne, for the ostensible purpose of supplying hawks, and pigeons to feed the hawks, and meat to feed the pigeons, and ever since then £1,000 a-year had been taken under these false pretences from the taxpayers for the purchase of hawks, pigeons, and meat. On his asking Sir Reginald Welby whether there was any prospect of the termination of that pension, the answer he received was that, so far as the Treasury was concerned, the money would have to be paid for ever. He ventured, however, to express a hope that the House would decide differently, and that the pension, which was a species of legalized blackmailing, would be summarily put an end to. If the House would kindly look at the Instructions given to the Committee on Perpetual Pensions, they would see that it was directed to inquire how far the present pensions should be continued, having due regard to the just claims of the present recipients and to economy in the Public Expenditure. Tested by those principles, he asked the House what right had the St. Alban's family to the continuance of that pension? There was no conceivable right, unless it was that the taxpayers had been defrauded to the amount of £225,000 in the past. That fact, however, hardly established a right to defraud them out of another £225,000 in the future, or to repeat the process as long as the British Empire lasted. They were told in the Committee upstairs more than once that if they interfered with the claims of individuals they would commit the sacrilegious crime of destroying vested interests. They had heard a great deal in Committee and elsewhere about vested interests, and it struck him as a curious thing that it was always the vested interests of individuals that were referred to, and that the vested interests of the public never got even a passing notice. He would venture to suggest that in asking the House to abolish the St. Alban's pension without further form or ceremony, they were only asking it to follow a very important precedent set by a Committee of the House in 1838. That Committee recommended that six pensions should cease at a much earlier period than that for which they were originally granted, and that 14 other pensions should absolutely cease then and there, no more money being paid to the recipients of the pensions than was due on the date the Committee made their Report. It seemed to him that that was a precedent quite good enough to follow in the case of the monstrous pension to the Master of the Hawks. The whole system of perpetual pensions was a relic of the good old times, when the institutions of the country were supposed to be kept up for the benefit of a few privileged families, while the common people were expected to return humble thanks, morning, noon, and night, for the privilege of being allowed to toil for these superior beings. There were still many persons who seemed to think that this country was a sort of free warren in which Providence intended them and their descendants to multiply and grow fat. But that was a tradition which was bound to perish in a short space of time, and it would be a great step towards bringing it to a final end if the House voted the Resolution which had been moved by the hon. Member for Northampton. The second part of the Resolution suggested that the whole pension system of the country required revision. Of course, it must be admitted that there were many cases of persons who had served the State, or were serving it, who deserved pensions. Our soldiers, our sailors, postmen, and many others of that class fully deserve pensions, for the simple reason that they were underpaid during the greater part of their lives. But he maintained that clerks in Public Departments who received from £600 to £1,200 a-year for work, if it could be called work, had no earthly claim to be supported by the State after their period of service was over. He would ask hon. Members to look over the Pension List and examine it carefully. It would be found that it was made up, not of persons who had been underpaid all their lives, but of persons who had been overpaid. Some appeared on the List because they had been used as Parliamentary tools and hacks; others because they had been useful in electioneering operations; and others because they were of no earthly use to anybody, and it had been found absolutely cheaper to pay them for doing nothing than to keep them muddling around Public Offices. On that point much evidence had been given before the Commission on the Civil Services now sitting. Mr. Collet, the Director of Naval Contracts, stated that the reorganization of his Department meant the pensioning off of a lot of incompetent men. It could be proved that the reorganization game, as played at the Admiralty, had burdened the country with hundreds of persons who were heavily pensioned for no other reason than that they were found so intolerably useless that it was desirable on any terms to get rid of them, or their places were wanted for the friends of newcomers into office. It would be seen, by an examination of the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), that in 1857 the reorganization of the Accountant General's Department alone cost £4,517 a-year in pensions; in 1869 another reorganization cost £8,400 a-year; and in 1878-9 a further reorganization cost £21,000 a-year in pensions and £52,000 in bonuses. Clerks who at that time were not more than 42 or 43 years of age received pensions of £328 a-year, and bonuses of £600 or £700. Another thing in connection with these pensions, which, he believed, was peculiar to this country, was that a man who received a very high salary in a Public Office was provided with a comfortable pension when he was bound to go out of office, which pension he received until he got another appointment, so that whether in or out of office the country took care of him. No matter what changes went on in the political world, he had a good salary or pension. There was one case, at least, at the present moment which was nothing more or less than a public scandal. There was an amount of £1,200 a-year added to the Civil List on the recommendation of the Ministers of the day. The object for which that money was provided by a Resolution of that House in 1834 was that it should be annually given to those who by personal services to the Crown, by the performance of duties to the public, or by useful discoveries in science, or by their attainments in literature and the arts, had merited the gracious consideration of the Sovereign and the gratitude of the country. No one who was acquainted with the way in which these matters were managed in this country would be surprised to learn that literature, science, and art had seen very little indeed of this money. The pensions had generally gone to political friends of the Ministers of the day, or to someone who was already receiving pensions from another Department of the State, and literature, science, and art had been coolly kicked out-of-doors. It was very difficult to get together the instances in which these pensions of £1,200 a-year had been awarded. They were not published in any one Paper. They appeared in separate Papers, but were not brought together. He had been over these Papers, and he would venture to trouble the House with two or three specimens of the way in which the fund for the relief of necessitous persons had been applied. Joseph Haydn, the author of *The Dictionary of Dates*, who was living in great want and misery, was allotted a pension of £25 a-year in order to make his declining years more comfortable. The widow of Thomas Hood received £100 a-year, and the widow of Douglas Jerrold also received £100 a-year. Those were genuine pensions given to literary persons, or those who were nearest and dearest to them in the world. But let them compare with these the pension given to Prince Lucien Bonaparte, who received £250 a-year from the same fund, which was understood to be intended for the recognition chiefly of services connected with literature, science, and art. Another pension of £500 a-year was given to Lady Stratford de Redcliffe out of the same scanty fund, although her husband received enormous sums during his period of service to the State. Whether Lady Stratford de Redcliffe deserved a pension was one thing, but whether it should be taken from this scanty fund, while poor literary men and artists were allowed to starve, was another question which he would leave to the House. Surely there were other funds from which these extravagant pensions might be taken. The principle on which the pensions were awarded often baffled comprehension. Two years ago £100 a-year was awarded to Mr. Augustus Mongredien, while Mr. Jefferies, an author of great and singular merit, who had added very charming books to the literature of this country, was vainly seeking a pension, and was allowed to pass the remainder of his useful days in the utmost penury and want. Would any three Members of that House say that Mr. Mongredien deserved £100 a-year for anything which he had written? That pension was a specimen of the maladministration of the fund. The fund was small at the best, and it ought to be awarded by the Minister of the day with the utmost discretion, tact, and good feeling. He came next to pensions given to Civil servants. He had counted 406 persons who were comfortably pensioned off before they were 40 years of age, and 774 who were pensioned off when between 40 and 50 years of age, or 1,180 who received pensions before they had reached 50 years of age. Scarcely one of them, as far as he could ascertain from the records, deserved either a large salary or a pension. In 1851 a pension of £500 a-year was given to a man of 25 years of age. What service could he have rendered to the country to deserve such a pension as that? Another person of 25 years of age got £300 a-year, and a lad of 22 got a pension of £150 a-year. He contended that if there were any principle under which these persons were entitled either to pensions or compensation allowance, that principle ought to be abolished forthwith, and nothing should be paid to persons who had done nothing for the country. In the Foreign Office a chief clerk received a salary of £1,250 a-year—and from his observation of the world he should say that £1,250 a-year was a very fair salary for a chief clerk, and that there were many men who would do the work for half the money. This gentleman, however, received in addition £950 a-year in the shape of compensation for the abolition of certain imaginary agencies, so that he got altogether £2,200 a-year. Prince Bismarck got £1,500 a-year; but, no doubt, this Foreign Office clerk was worth more than Prince Bismarck, and they had been told that they must not compare anything German with anything English. Another clerk in the Foreign Office received a salary of £925 a-year for 29 years, and at the age 47 he was retired on a pension of £650. No one could say that this clerk had served an ungrateful country. In the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade it was found that 14 persons were not required, and they were quartered on the taxpayers at a cost of £3,135 a-year. If they had been employed by a private firm they would simply have received notice to go and there would have been an end of the matter. One of these persons after 14 years of easy service received a pension of £1,200 a-year. This was what was called managing the funds of the country in an economical and creditable manner. In 1859 several offices connected with the Order of the Bath were abolished. One of them was a "blanc Coursier Herald," whatever heraldic prodigy that may be, and he received £124 a-year for life. Admiral Seymour held three offices and received a different pension for each, in addition to his other emoluments, which were very considerable. The best thing that could happen to a man in the public employment was that his office should be abolished. It was true that he lost his appointment, but he retained, what he valued far more, the emolument, and whatever happened he was well taken care of for the rest of his life. He would ask hon. Members to look at a case, which would be found in the Appendix, on page 8, of a Consul who retired in 1852 and was supposed to be done with. Yet this gentleman had been receiving a pension of £600 a-year ever since, and he was at the mature age of 38 when this stroke of good look overtook him in the entire abolition of his office. Then there was the Second Secretary at Constantinople, who retired at the age of 44 with a pension of £900 a-year. There was an extra chaplain, who had only served for two years, and had preached, perhaps, 100 sermons, more or less indifferent, during that period, and who was retired on a pension of £75 10*s.* for life, after having received his salary of £350 a-year for two years. He had now received £1,600, and the profits were still pouring in. Clearly, literature, science, and art were not in it with the chaplains. A third class interpreter in China was paid £528 a-year, and then retired exhausted at 32, after 11 years' service, with a pension of £146 a-year. Ill-health was the cause assigned for the retirement in 1875; but, as he was still alive, it was probable that the pension had re-invigorated him. Then there was the solicitor in the Office of Works, who received £1,800 a-year, and was pensioned off in 1868 at £1,200 a-year. They all knew that solicitors got the best of it in this world; but he thought that very few of them drew such a prize as that. The Legal Profession, as anyone would suppose, came well out of a scramble of this kind. There was the case of Sir T. B. Maule, Director of Public Prosecutions, who received a pension of £500 a-year for life after four years' service. He called that a monstrous abuse of the public money; and he believed the country, when the facts came to the knowledge of the taxpayers, would regard it as an outrage upon them. The Legal Visitors of Lunatics had a pension of £350 after seven years' service. That case was very remarkable, because the Comptroller and Auditor General had reported that the gentlemen in question was not entitled to compensation at all. Nevertheless, the money was given all the same. The Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy retired on a pension of £666 after six years' service. The payment of that money, also, was an outrage upon the public. He had dipped into the book, and had taken the cases at random from the Appendix. He did not search for them; but he had opened page after page of the book at random, and he thought he had given sufficient cases to show the necessity for a revision of the whole of the pension system. It might be contended that the pension system was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the efficiency of the Public Service; but other nations, quite as clever and as prosperous as we were, did not think so. The United States paid no pension to the President, or to the Cabinet, or to any person in Civil employ.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No.

Mr. JENNINGS said, yes. Probably the right hon. Gentleman knew more about the United States than he did; but he ventured to inform the right hon. Gentleman that he was strictly accurate in his statement, and that there was no pension system in the United States, as the right hon. Gentleman would find out if he would institute such an inquiry into the matter as he (Mr. Jennings) had done. No doubt, large amounts of money had been paid of late years in the shape of pensions—an amount of money exceeding our own Pension List; but it was only for services rendered during the Civil War. [Mr. Mundella: Hear, hear!] He was quite aware of the pensions spontaneously given to the soldiers, or their wives and children, who suffered in the Civil War; but that could have no sort of application to the point now before the House. There was no pension system whatever in the United States; but the people of that country had come to the conclusion that the wives and children of those who had lost their lives in maintaining the integrity of the country deserved some sort of reward. The United States, moreover, were in the singular position of having a Revenue much greater than they knew what to do with, and, therefore, they had decided that those who fought in the Civil War should have pensions for themselves, and for their wives and children when they were dead. That was the only instance of pensions being paid in the United States. And from the President down to the humblest Civil servant, no man received a pension of one penny. No one could suppose that the people of this country would go on much longer paying extraordinary high salaries accompanied by pensions. What he demanded was that we should either pay lower salaries with pensions, or the present rate of salaries without pensions. It had been suggested, and he thought it was a very reasonable suggestion, that 10 per cent should be deducted from all salaries, in order to form a pension fund, and that the Government should add 10 per cent to that. He believed that something of that sort would have to be done. He did not suppose that anyone, either in the House or out of it, could believe that in these days, when everything was being turned topsy-turvy, the people of this country would be content to pay twice or thrice the fair market value of labour, and in the end be required to support in idleness the innumerable horde of Tite Barnacles who now infest the State. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. C. HALL (Cambridgeshire, Chesterton) said, he did not propose to follow his hon. Friend in the interesting speech he had just delivered. He wished rather to refer to the first matter brought forward by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) in moving his Resolution—namely, the annual payment by the Commissioners of the Treasury to the Duchy of Cornwall. There seemed to be some doubt and misapprehension on the part of the hon. Member for Northampton; but the matter was an exceedingly simple one, and it had been most clearly explained to the Select Committee by Sir Reginald Welby in his evidence. His (Mr. C. Hall's) only apology for addressing the House upon the matter now, was the desire he felt to correct a doubt which appeared to prevail in the mind of the hon. Member for Northampton; as a matter of fact the payment in question was not a pension at all. The facts were as follows: By an Act of Parliament, or, rather, under a Charter of Edward III., there were granted to the first Duke of Cornwall certain tin duties, post groats, and white rent. By the Charter they were made payable to the Duke of Cornwall, and it was expressly stated that they were never to be severed from, but were to be part and parcel of the possessions of the Duchy of Cornwall. In the first year of the reign of Her Majesty it was decided to abolish the tin duties, owing to the fact that tin was no longer converted into coin, and one of the first acts of Her Majesty's Government was to decide that those duties should be abolished and a payment made in lieu thereof. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury were empowered to ascertain the average annual value of those duties during the last 10 years, after deducting the expenses of collection, and on that being ascertained the Commissioners were to pay out of the Consolidated Fund to Her Majesty — or whoever was then in possession of the Duchy of Cornwall—the average annual amount so ascertained, year by year. That was the way in which the matter stood then, and the amount was arrived at after careful consideration by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury for the time being. The amount then fixed had been correctly stated by the hon. Member for Northampton, and was ascertained to be on the post groats a sum of £620 per annum. The Lords Commissioners then issued a Treasury Minute stating that his late Majesty William IV. had announced his intention of not pressing for payment of this £620.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, the words were that His Majesty expressed his intention of abolishing post groats, tin duties, and white rent from the 5th of April, 1841. It further stated that His Majesty was pleased to confirm that intention; and therefore that the Lords' Commissioners were of opinion that it was no longer necessary to provide for this sum of £620 beyond the 5th of April, and that the compensation would be terminated after this date.

MR. C. HALL said, he was quite aware of that, and was just going to read the Minute. The hon. Member, however, had saved him the trouble; but it had nothing to do with the argument. Any lawyer would hold that the Sovereign had no right whatever to surrender those duties beyond the time she was entitled to receive them herself. She could not surrender duties which belonged to any succeeding Duke of Cornwall, and directly there was a Duke of Cornwall—that was to say on the birth of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the surrender would cease to have effect. It was expressly enacted that Her Majesty should have no more power to surrender the money payable by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury in lieu of the duties than she had to surrender the duties themselves. The fifth section of the Act, which the hon. Member seemed to have overlooked, expressly enacted that.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, if the hon. and learned Gentleman would read the section of the Act which abolished the duties altogether?

MR. C. HALL said, he would do so if the hon. Member desired; but it really had nothing to do with the question. Although the duties were abolished the Act went on to say that a payment was to be made instead of duties, and Her Majesty had no more power to surrender that payment than she had to surrender the duties before the Act passed. That disposed of the legal part of the question. He now came to the other part, on which the hon. Member for Northampton based his complaint. As a matter of fact, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, knowing the intention of William IV., and the expressed intention of Her Majesty, issued a Minute, which was in fact the *fons et origo mali* of the complaint of the hon. Member. That Minute stated that in future the sum of £620 would not be required to be paid. But shortly before the Prince of Wales was born, the officers of the Duchy pointed out to the Commissioners that Her Majesty had no power to surrender the rights of a future Duke of Cornwall. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, no doubt being well advised in the matter, came to the same conclusion, and upon the birth of the Duke of Cornwall directed the payment to be continued. He ventured to say that no other conclusion was possible.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that not only was there no evidence of that; but Sir Reginald Welby had stated in his evidence that there was no Minute of any kind after the year 1841.

MR. C. HALL said, the hon. Member was again a little premature. He was just going to state that there was no Minute to that effect; but there was a correspondence to that effect, of which evidence was given before the Select Committee. [MR. BRADLAUGH: No.] If the hon. Member would exhibit a little more patience, he would find that he was stating the facts quite correctly. He wished, however, to point out an inaccuracy of the hon. Member. The hon. Member had stated that King William IV. announced his intention of not pressing for this payment, because it was only £10 a-year. There was no evidence whatever to support that. The lease for that sum was given to a gentleman who had been a distinguished officer in the Duchy, and at the expiration of the lease, King William would become entitled to the £620 a-year in the same way as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was now, and the sum had been paid ever since. He believed he had dealt with the matter before the House. The sole complaint of the hon. Member for Northampton was that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, when they received a communication from the Council of the Duchy, and determined that they must pay, having no alternative but to do so, forgot to issue a Minute recording the fact. This was no new matter. The hon. Member had called the attention of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) when it was in power, to the matter; he had brought it before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), who conferred on the subject with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. He ventured to say that the subject had been most carefully sifted by the present and late Government, and the result was as had been stated. The payment had been made for over 40 years without dispute or opposition; but there was one fact which came out in evidence, and it was that when the Government for the time being considered the question of the allowance to be made to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on his marriage, computations were made in which this amount of £620 a-year was taken into account as being part of the revenues of the Duchy, so that the country had not been the loser of one penny in this respect. He had thought it necessary to make these observations in order that the circumstances should be understood by the House. The hon. Member had, he ventured to say with all possible respect, discovered a mare's nest; and he regretted that he was so loth to admit the fact after the conclusive evidence given before the Select Committee.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I may, perhaps, follow the hon. and learned Gentleman, who has disposed of the two most important charges made in the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton. But before I proceed to say anything on the question, let me at once admit that this is by no means a Party question. I have, therefore, no reason to complain of hon. Members on either side of the House, who endeavour to lessen the public burdens and to cure any defects which may have grown up in the past in the public administration. Both sides of the House and we ourselves on these Benches will cordially welcome any assistance which may tend to do justice to the public at large as well as to public servants. The hon. Member, in speaking of the subject of pensions, laid down the proposition that every Civil servant should make provision for himself. He was bound to admit that this principle was sound, and should be generally applied if possible. The justification for pensions can only be found in the public advantage and necessity. The question we have to consider is whether those who have accepted office and come into the enjoyment of pensions should be deprived of them. I apprehend that no one would desire that faith should be broken to anyone who is entitled as the result of past service to pensions or superannuations, or any payment out of the public funds. I agree that justice should be done without regard to Party partiality or interest. The hon. Member directed special attention to certain pensions paid out of the Consolidated Fund. It is not for me to defend these pensions. They have been established by Parliament, and must be presumed, therefore, to have been established on the ground of public policy. I can imagine that many pensioners have rendered great service in the past, and have arrived at high office and distinction by reason of their ability and devotion to the Public Service. I can imagine that these gentlemen, having been withdrawn from the ordinary occupations of life, have not had the opportunity of increasing their private fortune or providing for the vicissitudes of affairs. I state this because I have had occasion to consider whether it was fair or right that certain applications should be entertained; and I have come to the conclusion that probably none are of greater consideration to the State than the men who have devoted themselves through a long life to the Public Service, having thereby deprived themselves of the opportunity of making a fortune adequate to their positions in life. The hon. Member is aware that a declaration is required from all public servants who accept pensions that they need such assistance to enable them to live in private life. The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) made a serious indictment against the action of our forefathers. We are not here to defend that action, but we are here to maintain public faith, and with a qualification that due regard should be had to the just claims of the recipients of pensions, I can have no objection to the Motion. My hon. Friend, in the course of his interesting speech, spoke of persons who have no earthly claim to pensions; of incompetent men who have been pensioned, of persons pensioned simply because places were wanted for newcomers, who were intolerably incompetent. I have probably as great a knowledge of what is called the organization of the public offices as any man in this House. I have had the experience of 20 or 30 years. I have some experience, also, of business in private life, and I have found cases in which employers have felt themselves bound to make some provision for men who, after having served them faithfully for 10, 15, or 20 years, or perhaps longer, have become gradually less capable and less competent for the work required of them; and under these circumstances, if there were no positive fault, their employers have felt it to their interest and advantage not to leave them absolutely without means. I am not urging anything which appears contrary to the public interest, nor do I desire to incur any charge which might be avoided with due regard to the public interest. How would you have the public served? Would you have them served by faithful servants who know that they have a certainty or by men who know that they may be used for a given time and then cast aside? I am aware from my own experience that one of the great reasons which induces competent men to enter the service of the State is the knowledge that they cannot be thrown aside, that they will make a career, and that not even the caprice of a superior officer can have the effect of determining that career unless some grave fault is committed. Undoubtedly that security has some great disadvantages. It has the disadvantage of a superannuation charge and of the comparative independence which an officer may have with regard to those under whom he serves; but it has great advantages, inasmuch as it gives the officer himself a motive for giving all his energies and devoting himself entirely to the service of the State, because he knows that he will be cared for in the long run. Another argument by which pensions can be justified is that we take young men into the public service just at the age when they would otherwise be able by entering into some business or profession to make a position in life for themselves. The Government are fully prepared to go with the hon. Member for Northampton in a desire to effect economy and to examine into the system under which these pensions and superannuations are given. I am prepared to go as far as we can with the hon. Member, but do not let us take a step which would deprive the Public Service of the best servants. Do not let us sacrifice efficiency for the sake of a temporary economy. My hon. Friend behind me made the very important statement that there were no pensions in the United States Civil Service; I believe that statement to be entirely accurate, but if there is one subject which more than any other attracts attention in the United States, it is that very condition of the Civil Service. Until recently, at all events, a Civil servant in the United States was liable to dismissal on a change in the Presidency. Well, I cannot think that the Public Service gains by that system, and I believe it has been admitted by some of the best men in the United States that a Civil Service founded on something like our own system would be a great advantage to their country, and would leave the Civil Service out of the area of public politics. I have also to remind the House again of one fact in connection with the present serious charges for superannuations. It is that this subject has been under the consideration of the House of Commons repeatedly for the last 30 or 40 years. In 1857 an Act was passed which abolished the contributions made by public servants themselves to the Superannuation Fund, on the ground that the abolition was a public advantage. The Resolution on which that Act was founded was carried in opposition to the Government of the day. [Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Lord Naas's Resolution.] The House of Commons at that time had the whole subject under consideration. I am not, however, by any means unwilling that the House of Commons should again review the conditions under which these allowances are made. I ask the House to assist the Government in a matter which is not a Party question at all, for I have no doubt that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are as anxious as I am myself that there should be economy and above all that there should be efficiency in the Public Service. I have, therefore, Sir, to suggest to the hon. Member for Northampton that in lieu of the words on the Paper he should move:—

> "That in the opinion of this House steps should be forthwith taken to determine hereditary pensions and allowances with due regard to any just claims of the respective recipients and to economy in the public expenditure; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system."

If the hon. Gentleman will adopt these words the Government will cordially accept them, and we will endeavour, as far as in us lies, to give effect to them.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he gladly assented to the proposed change, and he did so the more readily because the words suggested by the right hon. Gentleman were precisely the same as he had himself placed on the Order Book of the House when he first moved in the matter. He would ask the indulgence of the House to explain one statement of the Attorney General for the Duchy (Mr. C. Hall), whom he was afraid he had too often interrupted. There was no Correspondence whatever which showed that the Treasury had considered and decided on the continuance of the £630 14*s*. 2*d*. There was a protest by the Duchy, and nothing more. In the examination of Sir Reginald Welby before the Select Committee, Question 420, the Chairman asked—

> "You assumed from that, in your former answer, that there was a subsequent decision of the Treasury, which might not be recorded upon the Minute Book, that the payment ought to be continued?"

Sir Reginald Welby answered—

> "I have got no evidence to put before the Committee in confirmation of such an opinion. It is difficult for me to suppose that the payment would have been continued without some instruction. At the same time, I wish the Committee particularly to understand that I have got no evidence whatever to offer in support of this opinion."

This clearly showed the accuracy of the statement he had made to the House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I am somewhat unwilling to interpose, but the question is one of great importance, and there are a few words which I think it is necessary for me to say about it in consequence of a portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings), although with regard to the general tenour of that speech I thought it was a valuable addition to this debate. I am extremely glad that the Government have taken a prudent course in accepting the substance of this Motion, and I agree in thinking that the modification which the right hon. Gentleman has made in the terms of the Motion is in the nature of an improvement. I feel that the Government in accepting such a Motion have undertaken very considerable responsibility, for there is no question of promising to give consideration in the sense in which naturally and necessarily such promises are often made. It is quite evident, considering the vastness of the subject and the extent and divergence of its branches, the Government will have to consider, first, how far provision has already been made in the Commission already sitting as to some portion of the subject; and, secondly, what course should be taken to promote a practical handling or to promote a careful examination of other branches of the question. Undoubtedly I for one, and the Mover and Seconder of the Motion also, will expect that some practical course should be adopted. The question is perhaps a wider one than most Members of the House are aware of. While the attention is attracted by a great mass of figures which express the burden of the country in connection with the necessarily very large and extended Civil Service, there are many branches of the subject which require distinct and separate examination. I may now criticize that portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport in which he found it necessary to refer in some detail to the delicate and difficult questions relating to the administration of the annual grant of £1,200 a-year at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury. In the first place let me say, having had the administration of it for 11 years, and having known something of its administration by others, I can venture to assure the hon. Member that he is under an entire misapprehension in supposing that the grant, so far as I know, has ever been distributed with reference to political considerations. I venture to state that with very great confidence. Undoubtedly a case did happen many years ago—nearly 50 years ago—on which grave criticism might be made from that point of view; but it is entirely out of date, and I will not revive it by mentioning names, though it is obvious that the reception that event met with became the best security against any similiar abuse. The hon. Member also seemed to imagine that poverty was the main qualification for the receipt of these pensions. That, I think, is not the case. The terms are laid down with great care in an Act of Parliament of 1837. As I read the Act, and as it has always been read, distinction is the necessary element, and poverty, if it intervened at all, is a secondary element. It is an element which will not dispense with the element of distinction. There are pensions upon the Civil List of the Queen which are available for poverty, but that is not the case here. The £1,200 at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury must be distributed on the ground of distinguished service, though no doubt it would not be entirely decent to give or to accept such a grant in cases where a large income was enjoyed. I will now mention one or two cases to which the hon. Member referred, and for which I myself am responsible. I will only say with regard to these cases, and with regard to the Civil List generally, having been responsible for a long time for two of the most difficult and the nicest branches of the pension system—namely, the Civil List, pensions for distinguished merit, and pensions for distinguished service, that nothing would give me greater pleasure than to appear before a Committee and give an account of every single act I have performed in this respect. I was not surprised at the observations of the hon. Member, and I make no complaint at all with regard to them. They were not conceived any more than is any Party speech in a Party spirit; they were observations perfectly fair for the hon. Member to make; but at the same time I cannot accept their justice. The hon. Member commented adversely on a pension of £250 granted when I was Prime Minister to Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte. I do not think poor mortals ought to be proud of anything they do, but if I were proud of any pension I ever gave it would be of that one, because it was a pension in every point of view most eminently excellent and requisite. It so happens that it was made the subject of pointed comment in this House at the time. I made a lengthened statement in answer, and I do not think I ever had the pleasure and satisfaction of sitting down after making a statement amid more universal cheering. Prince Lucien Bonaparte is a person who has rendered enormous service to literature at his own expense when he was a comparatively opulent man. But the ruin of the French Empire in 1870 entirely altered the position of Prince Lucien and wholly cut off his literary pursuits. He was not responsible for the French Empire or its ruin, but the circumstances made it desirable—and it was no dishonour to him—that he should receive an honourable notice of this kind. There was this additional reason for the pension. One of the rules—a very good one—which are generally observed in the distribution of this £1,200 is not to give to the popular branch of literature. The popular branch of literature pays itself; but the services of Prince Lucien Bonaparte, in connection with which he incurred a large expenditure, were in the department of philology, an extremely difficult subject, but one very necessary to be explored. At the same time it is one which addresses itself to a very competent but extremely narrow public; indeed any book published hardly ever pays its expenses. Prince Lucien was a naturalized subject of the Crown, and in every point of view he was one of the fittest, if not the fittest, recipient of this grant. The hon. Member also referred to a pension of £100 a-year to Mr. Mongredien. I cannot recollect if that pension was granted by me or not; but at least it was not a very large one. The hon. Gentleman also dwelt upon a case in which I was responsible for granting a pension of £500 a-year—I admit a very large sum under this grant—to the widow of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. I am glad here to be able to illustrate what I have said to the effect that these grants were not made with reference to political predilections. This is seen by the fact that Prince Lucien Bonaparte voted against the Liberal candidate in the borough of Chelsea, where he has a house, while the distinguished nobleman, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, was a well-known Conservative, who sat for between 30 and 40 years on the other side of this House, or of the House of Lords. Whether a pension of £500 could properly be given to the widow of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe is, I think, a matter which may well attract the notice, or even the animadversion, of the hon. Member, and I should be happy to lay fully before a Committee the considerations which influenced me in it. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, while he lived, enjoyed an income from a diplomatic pension. and there was no case for making any application on his account. But when he died that pension expired. He had never been a wealthy man. All his life he had devoted himself to the Public Service, and the services which he rendered in Constantinople were undoubtedly of the highest order. I admit that there may be differences of opinion as to these services—that is to say, as to the policy on which his acts were founded, and as to the justice of the sanguine expectations which he entertained in common with Lord Palmerston and some other able men as to the capacity of the Turkish Empire for what is sometimes called regeneration. Although I myself have never been a sanguine believer in the regeneration, there is no doubt whatever that many things were done in the time of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, when he was Ambassador in Turkey, which were of the nature of great and substantial reforms. If the hon. Member wishes to know the height to which Lord Stratford ascended as a diplomatist, and the place he occupied in the estimation of the great majority of people at that period, let him consult the history of Mr. Kinglake, and there he will find the great and eminent services rendered by Lord Stratford at Constantinople set out with a splendour I cannot rival. Lord Stratford, as I have said, was not a wealthy man, and I believe it is a well-known fact—there is no disgrace in it—that his private means and economies disappeared in consequence of the repudiation by the Turkish Empire of its debts. Believing in the Turk, and in Turkish regeneration, he had given that strongest of all evidence of his belief when he invested in their funds—and unquestionably it became a matter for consideration whether, so far as the public were concerned, Lady Stratford was to remain without provision. I believe that all the Members whom I address would, in the circumstances in which I then stood, have done just as I did with respect to the Motion before the House. I will not dilate upon the reasons which lead me to support it. They are very strong indeed. I have pointed to the fact that I do not think it possible that it can be treated as a mere abstract Motion. I consider it a Motion intended and likely to lead to practical results, and I thank the Government for having accepted it in that sense. And the evident intention of the Government is to give effect to the views of the mover of the Amendment, which was so ably seconded by the hon. Member opposite, and to place this matter upon a footing which shall be above Party considerations. In these circumstances I trust that in the few hours which this debate has occupied, a fair amount of public business has been transacted.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked leave to withdraw his original Amendment in order to bring it up in an amended form.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system;"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

Question proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool) said, as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, and as one greatly interested in the reform of the system of pensions in the Civil Service, he desired to say, in behalf of the Committee, that the action of the Government in accepting the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had materially tended to assist them in their labours. He was glad that the system of pensions was to be made the subject of inquiry. The hon. Member for Northampton had quoted some evidence given before the Committee of which he (Sir Matthew White Ridley) was Chairman, to the effect that, whatever might be thought of the pension system, it was high time that it was inquired into, not only from the point of view of the expense to the country, but also from the point of view that it did not conduce to the extent intended to the efficiency of the Public Service. He was not entitled on that occasion to express any particular opinions which he might entertain; but he might express his belief that there was not one of his Colleagues on the Commission who did not feel the importance of the inquiry on which they were engaged, and who did not expect, before many weeks had elapsed, the Committee would be able to present their Report to the House. The reform suggested in the course of the debate would be, of course, of material assistance to the Committee, who had already taken evidence on the subject. Evidence had been taken since the Report had been issued; but he pointed out that the more the subject was gone into the more difficult it appeared to present a scheme which would have a chance of lasting for several years; the great difficulty being that so many years must elapse before the scheme to be proposed could come into operation. He, therefore, asked for the indulgence of the House if the Committee were not able to present their Report as quickly as many would desire. He rejoiced that the limited Report they had been able to present had received what he conceived to be substantial approval, and trusted that before much more time had elapsed the Committee would be able to present a successful scheme to the House.

Mr. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, he rose to protest against the remarks made by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) with regard to a very distinguished gentleman—Sir J. B. Maule—whose pension of £500 the hon. Member had adverted to. Sir J. B. Maule had, for a great number of years, been a distinguished Member of the Party opposite; he had served on the Commission which inquired into the Jamaica outrages; he had served as an unpaid member of the Municipal Commission for four years, and, to his personal knowlege, declined the high position of Chief Justice of India, because he preferred to carry on his professional practice. Sir J. B. Maule had been likewise selected at a salary of £3,000 a-year to discharge the office of Public Prosecutor. The operation of that office had not been satisfactory; but he ventured to say that whatever failure there might have been it could not be laid on the shoulders of this gentleman. It had been thought desirable, in the interest of the Public Service, that the appointment should lapse, or rather be transferred to the Solicitor to the Treasury, who was made Director of Public Prosecutions. For the loss of his office, Sir J. B. Maule had received the very small pension of £500 per annum. As a political opponent of this gentleman, he felt bound to make these remarks in reply to the statement of the hon. Member for Stockport, and he regretted that some personal matters had been introduced into the discussion which had, in some degree, obscured the main question on which he thought there was no difference of opinion in that House.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *added*.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system.

THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH.—OBSERVATIONS.

Sir HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) said, it would be in the recollection of the House that on the 15th of February, in answer to his hon. Friend the Member for South Salford (Mr.

Howorth), the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) stated the preponderance of marks in the Examinations at Woolwich was given for subjects which were of the most practical value to the majority of officers, and which were able to be least easily crammed. In this examination it was clear that the marks attached to scientific subjects were low, out of all proportion to their importance; for while no less than 11,000 marks might be obtained by candidates for languages alone, only 2,000 marks could be obtained for those subjects which went under the wide title of experimental science, the practical importance of which, with regard to the Army, was admitted by the War Office themselves. For on page 13 of the Regulations it will be seen that in the course which was compulsory on those who had entered the Academy, Science stood next to Mathematics, while it stood above Modern Languages. It was, therefore, clear that the War Department itself attached importance to the teaching of Science, although in the entrance examinations for Woolwich its value was practically ignored. So much, then, for the statement that the War Office in these examinations laid stress upon those subjects which were of practical importance to the majority of officers. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had gone on to say, in reply to the Question of his hon. Friend, that those subjects least easily crammed were included in the Examinations. That was an important statement, because the subject of Experimental Science was not easy or liable to be crammed. The result of former examinations showed that Science was offered less frequently than other subjects by successful candidates—that meant that the candidates did not find it pay to bring in Science and that it could not be easily crammed. Another important matter was the influence which the new Code of Regulations had on the great public schools of the country, from which a large number of candidates came. He said that in those schools, having regard to the disproportion of marks as between Science and languages, Science teaching would fail and gradually disappear because it would not pay. It seemed to him that, under the present system, young men might be chosen who had not the slightest aptitude for the scientific work which at the present day was absolutely necessary in this the chief scientific arm of the Service. A young man might enter Woolwich now with purely linguistic acquirements; at any rate, a young man might pass who had those acquirements in addition to mathematical training; and he maintained that by the system at present in force it was impossible for the authorities who examined the candidates to choose those young men who showed a capacity for scientific training. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had also said that this question had been considered by a strong Committee. But was it strong in an educational or a military sense? He could not believe that a strong educational Committee could have framed the present rules, because they were full of faults. First, they led to the rejection of candidates best fitted for the work that had to be done. Then they offered, too, a high premium for modern languages, and thus ran the risk that young men would prefer to go abroad in order to acquire languages rather than stay at home and pass through the regular curriculum of our great public schools. Thirdly, the regulations were liable to act fatally on the general tendency of what it was now most desirable to encourage — scientific training in our schools. He trusted they might hear that the Secretary of State for War, with the frankness that distinguished him in his statements, would undertake that these regulations should be remodelled, so as to give Science its proper position in these preliminary examinations.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, he had listened to the statement of the hon. Member with all the interest which attached to his high authority on the subject. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that he would pay the greatest possible attention to the views which had been urged. He explained that the regulations allotting a number of marks to particular subjects on examination for the Royal Military College were made in 1884. At that time there had been a very careful investigation, and the number of marks awarded for Science was reduced. Representations were made to the Secretary of State for War at that time by various scientific authorities, and the result was that the number of marks allotted to Science was raised. Practically, that system was established by a general consensus of opinion, was recommended by upwards of 50 head-masters, and considered by the Civil Service Commissioners and other high authorities. That system had been tried in the Royal Military College since 1884, and it was curious that, although the hon. Member appeared to complain of the regulations, as far as any experience seemed to show, the War Office had only heard that the regulations with regard to the Royal Military College had worked exceedingly well since that date. There had been an investigation by a Committee, presided over by Lord Morley, and it recommended that the original intention should be carried out, and that the system of the Royal Military Academy should be assimilated to that in the Royal Military College. It was not, however, a matter thoroughly adapted for being brought before the House. He would be glad to meet the hon. Gentleman and others who might be interested in the subject in order to hear and discuss what considerations should be urged in order to induce him to modify the regulations and see what alterations should be made.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman had met the case very fairly. The question was one of great public importance. Woolwich had given more impulse to the study of science in the public schools in the country than any other motive power. When the scheme of 1884 was brought forward for Sandhurst, it was modified owing to representations made in the House. But what had been the result? The result had been exceedingly disastrous to scientific education. Before 1884, 8 per cent of the candidates at Sandhurst took science subjects. Since then only 2 per cent had done so. In the collegiate education at Woolwich, Experimental Science had a greater position than modern languages, but, according to the system which they were now bringing forward, a lad might enter Woolwich as a candidate for a scientific service without scientific knowledge. The linguistic capacity of a man was a perfectly different thing from his scientific capacity; and though he approved of high marks for French and German, yet he thought they should take care that they did not, by their entrance examination, admit men who gave no evidence, by previous training, of scientific capacity. They were about to bring young men into a scientific institution without sifting them to see whether they had scientific knowledge or a scientific capacity. They might get 11,000 marks through languages, and it would only be possible for them to get 2,000 marks by experimental science. Therefore, all the schools of the country would go back to the old mode of preparing lads in languages, and would discontinue preparing them in sciences. He asked that the growing love of Science, which was important for the interests of this country, should not be extinguished. They had a scheme brought before them which would certainly prevent the colleges which were not giving so much attention to Experimental Science from going on with that work, because it would not pay. By the conference to which the Secretary of State for War had invited them, in order more fully to discuss that matter, he hoped to be able to convince the right hon. Gentleman, and to induce him to consent to a small change. They only wanted him to raise the 2,000 marks for science to 3,000 marks, and put it on the same footing as languages, French, German, and Latin, and they would then be content.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) said, there were many schools now engaged in preparing candidates for Woolwich, the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, and other Institutions; and it was, of course, the desire of the masters as well as of the boys in such schools to prepare for those subjects which commanded the most marks. He was, therefore, correct in saying that the education given was really in a great measure dependent on the number of marks allotted to each subject at the examinations. That being so, it was very desirable not only that the marks should be properly regulated as between the different subjects, including, of course, modern languages and science, but that there should be a system thoroughly considered and organized, and recognized as a durable system; because it had been a great evil in the past that constant changes had been made, sometimes backwards and forwards, and the systems were not of a more permanent character. He had considerable experience, and took a great interest in the matter, having himself been at Woolwich, having passed five sons through the Royal Military Academy, and hoping to pass a sixth; and he felt that it was a great evil that changes were being constantly made in the system of examinations. Every boy intended for a Woolwich military career had to spend four or five years in preparatory studies, at great labour and expense, and he thought it a great hardship that a boy should find that the number of marks allotted to the different subjects had been altogether altered at the end of his preparatory course, and that, consequently, a great part of his time and money had been more or less wasted. He was, therefore, glad that his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War had invited the scientific Gentlemen opposite to confer with him, and he hoped that an arrangement would be made of a more durable as well as of a more satisfactory character than those which had obtained in the past.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENT — PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—SEATS IN THIS HOUSE.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden), in rising to move a Resolution,

> "That a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked 'Committee,' which shall be delivered to such Member on his application;"

said, he thought he should best consult the wishes of hon. Members and the despatch of the Business of the House if he spoke as concisely and briefly as possible. The object of the change which the Amendment implied was, as hon. Members would see, the further convenience and comfort of the Members serving on Select Committees or Private Bill Committees. The change he proposed would even do more than promote the comfort of hon. Gentlemen serving on Committees—it would materially affect and advance the pecuniary interests of the public. If the House of Commons was constructed in the same way as most of the Houses of Legislature of the world were constructed there would be no necessity for the Amendment which stood in his name, because there would be reserved in the House a seat or locality for each Member. But the wisdom of their predecessors had decreed that on the floor of the House there should not be space for more than 400 out of the 670 Members, and what the wisdom of their predecessors had decreed the matured common sense of the present generation saw no way of getting out of. And so it came about that any Member who was desirous of obtaining a place in the House from which to speak or listen to a debate was obliged to come down one, two, or three hours before the House met—possibly at great personal inconvenience—place his hat on a seat, be present at Prayers, and affix a card on the back of the seat. If a Member serving on a Private Bill Committee wished to obtain a seat in the House on any day on which that Committee was sitting, it would be necessary in future that the Committee should adjourn in order that he might be present at Prayers. This sometimes happened under the old *régime*; but under the new Rule, providing that Committees were not to rise when the House met, it would be always necessary, supposing the Members wished to retain seats in the House, for the Committee to adjourn, and for the Members to come down to the House. The proceedings of the Committee would thereby be stopped, and, as a consequence, the suitors would be put to very large expense. His Amendment provided that a Member of a Committee, when he came down to the House, should be able to obtain a different card from that at present in use, affix it to his seat, and thus ensure for himself a seat. It would not be necessary for him to be present at Prayers. Hon. Members would see he suggested that the cards to be used by such Members should be of a different colour to those ordinarily used. He hoped no one would suspect for a moment that he made this suggestion because he imagined that any hon. Member of the

House would so far let his personal convenience, or his desire to hear the eloquence of the House, overcome his natural respect for the Rules of the House as to make use of the provision he (Mr. H. Gardner) proposed. It was, however, desirable there should not be any ground for a shadow of suspicion, and that was the reason why the use of cards of a different colour should be used. He stated at the outset that one of the objects of the Amendment was the pecuniary advantage of the public at large. As the House was aware, suitors before Committees often employed very eminent counsel, and it was a peculiarity of learned gentlemen that when they were eminent they were also very expensive. To suitors before Committees, therefore, time was essentially money. A friend of his, formerly a Member of the House, told him that he calculated that the adjournment of a Committee for an hour had cost the suitors £100. It must be obvious to the House that the adjournments necessary, unless some such Amendment as he proposed were adopted, would cost suitors a considerable sum of money. Under these circumstances, and having very great trust from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) the other day that the Government would accept it, he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked 'Committee,' which shall be delivered to such Member on his application."—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had endeavoured, so far as he could, to gather the general feeling of hon. Members of the House upon the question which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. Gardner), and he had arrived at the conclusion that the Members generally desired that some such provision as that which the hon. Member had suggested should be adopted. Therefore, without at all going into the question, even at the length the hon. Gentleman had, he suggested it would be desirable that the House should adopt an Order of this character upon the understanding that the cards should be delivered to the Members of the Committees who desired to have them by the Committee clerks. It was obviously necessary that the cards should be in the custody of persons on whom absolute reliance could be placed.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, the words of the Motion were "a Member serving on a Select Committee." Would those words include Members serving on what were generally called Grand Committees?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was hardly able to say whether that would be the case or not. It must be remembered, however, that the hon. Gentlemen serving on Grand Committees would probably be 80 in number; that they would be able to come in from the Committee Room, take their seats, and go away then. Such Members were not required to be in as constant attendance as the Members of Select Committees or Private Bill Committees. A Member might leave without exposing himself, or anyone else, to inconvenience—at any rate, without causing any expense to the parties before them. Perhaps it would be well they should have some experience of the working of the Rule as applied to Members serving on Select Committees or Private Bill Committees before applying it to Members of the Grand Committees.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Resolved, That a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked "Committee," which shall be delivered to such Member on his application.

SUPPLY — Committee upon *Monday* next.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[BILL 165.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that, as his remarks on a former occasion were necessarily short, owing to the hour of the night when the debate was initiated, he would now explain a little more fully what the Bill sought to effect. The Bill had been prepared in order to insure the safety of the Abbey, which would, he was sure, be regarded by all hon. Members, whether belonging to the Church of England or not, as a great public monument which they were bound to preserve. It was at the present moment in a very grave condition. It was estimated when arrangements were made by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster in 1868 that £20,000 would then be sufficient for the work of repairing the building. Recently, however, it had been found that the repair of the fabric would now necessitate an expenditure of nearly £60,000; and the funds in the hands of the Dean and Chapter were wholly inadequate to meet that charge. The Dean and Chapter had been for a considerable period in entire ignorance of the serious condition of the Abbey, owing to the fact that the dilapidations were in portions of the building which were inaccessible. In 1886 an advance of £10,000 from the funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was authorized by a Bill passed by the late Government, and that advance was made a charge on the funds of Westminster Abbey, if they were capable of discharging it. It was therefore sought in the present Bill to relieve the Abbey funds from the payment of that amount. It would be impossible for the Dean and Chapter to meet such a charge as £66,000, even if it was spread over a long period of years. The funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which had suffered very much from the agricultural depression, did not enable them to make the necessary grant. It was, therefore, proposed by the Bill that the Dean and Chapter should be at liberty to surrender their estates to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who should have authority to grant to them an annual income equal to that which in 1868 it was estimated those estates would yield. There had been great depreciation in the value of property in some parts of the kingdom, notably in the land belonging to the Dean and Chapter. The proposal, therefore, of the Bill was to give the Dean and Chapter that same amount of security in regard to their income which it was intended they should receive in 1868. It was not proposed to relieve them of the responsibility which attached to them out of that income to maintain the fabric, but it was intended that the funds which would be provided by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should be recovered from the Dean and Chapter, as they were able to pay the amount. Under this Bill considerable economies would be effected in the establishment of the Abbey, which would secure a sufficient income to meet the large charges which would be involved in repaying the capital sum required for the restoration of the Abbey. The Bill provided that on the next avoidance of a canonry other than those which attached to the parishes of St. Margaret's and St. John's, Westminster, the appointment should be suspended so long as it might be necessary to do so, and also authorized the Dean and Chapter to submit new Statutes which would effect considerable economy in the establishment of the Abbey, and would provide sufficent income to meet the charges on the capital sum advanced. The sole object of this Bill was to make provision for the maintenance of the Abbey; there was no intention to carry out any structural alterations, or to effect any architectural changes in the building, but merely to maintain and to restore the fabric to the condition in which it had been handed down by our predecessors. He hoped that this short explanation would be considered satisfactory and that the House would agree to pass the second reading of the Bill, which he believed to be essential for the preservation of one of those national monuments to which was attached much that was interesting in the history of England, and which Englishmen would regret to see falling into decay. He desired to repeat that no charge whatever would be thrown on the national finances by this Bill, and that it dealt entirely with ecclesiastical funds.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he desired to say that the interesting statement the First Lord of the Treasury had given them, showed that the hon. Member for Swansea Town (Mr. Dillwyn) was amply justified in the action he took the other evening in protesting against such a Bill being read a second time without a word of explanation from the Treasury Bench. He was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman's definition of the word "restoration," and he assured the right hon. Gentleman that no one was more ready than hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House to support a measure for the preservation of a great historical monument like that of Westminster Abbey.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) said, that by the Bill they were asked to apportion funds between the maintenance of the fabric and the stipends of the Dean and Chapter and other ecclesiastics. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) would say what connection there was between the restoration of Westminster Abbey and the stipends in question. It appeared to him that this Bill was introduced for the purpose of enabling certain parties to have a claim to compensation at the time of the Disestablishment of the Church. They now found that ecclesiastical situations were made for temporary purposes, but that, finally, they became permanent. The office bearers became holdfasts, and would assuredly claim compensation. This was only a species of public plunder. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Of course it was, because the money for these repairs would be provided out of the funds of the nation at large. He should like to see the fabric of Westminster Abbey maintained. The Abbey had been diverted from its original purpose, but still he supposed it was a national monument. If the Government could show him there was anything between a national monument of this kind and the distribution of funds to Dean and Chapters, and so forth, officials already highly paid — and amongst whom a large amount was distributed only last year—he should raise no objection to the Bill. It seemed to him most extraordinary that those men should be tacked on to the Bill. The payment of stipends could have nothing to do with masonry. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had said that no taxation would be used for the purposes of the Bill; but last year between £60,000 and £70,000, raised by taxation, was spent upon Westminster Abbey. If that money had been properly used there would have been no need for the expenditure now proposed. If the authorities chose to turn the Abbey into a theatre and then turn it back again into a church, that was their business; but why the Dean and Chapter and other officials should have stipends provided for them by this Bill he could not understand. He regretted he should have had to interfere in this matter. He only did so because he saw that the proposition contained in the Bill was not honest. If the Government wanted to distribute money amongst already overpaid Churchmen, who had large churches and no flocks worth speaking of, it would be well they should bring in a separate Bill for the purpose.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY (Oxford University) said, he joined in the regret the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane) had just expressed, that he should have interfered in the discussion, because it was quite clear the hon. Member had not read the Bill. The fact was, that the Bill proposed to deal with the property of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, and it created for the first time a fabric fund—[*Cries of* "No, no!"] He (Sir John R. Mowbray) spoke with knowledge of the Bill. At present, the first charge on the revenues was the salary of the Dean and of minor officers, and, so far from giving them any increased claim on the revenues, it gave them a decreased claim. It made the maintenance of the fabric the first charge. If the hon. Gentleman had read the Bill, he could not have made the remarks he had addressed to the House.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES (PENSIONS) BILL.—[BILL 92.]

(*Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Godson, Mr. Hastings*

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Richard Temple.*)

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.), in moving the adjournment of the debate, said the hon. Baronet could never have expected to bring the Bill in to-day, and, perhaps, it was as well that they should have the Easter Recess in which to consider the provisions of the Bill.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half past
Seven o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 26*th March*, 1888.

Their Lordships met;—And having gone through the Business on the Paper without debate,

House adjourned at Two o'clock, till
To-morrow, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 26*th March*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees—Pilotage, *nominated;* Private Bill Legislation, *nominated;* Revenue Departments Estimates, *nominated;* Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply), *nominated.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—Financial Statement.

Public Bills—*Leave*—Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), *debate adjourned.*

Ordered — First Reading — Customs (Isle of Man) * [195].

First Reading—Pharmacy Acts Amendment * [196].

Second Reading — Bail (Scotland) * [172]; County Courts Consolidation * [173]; Glebe Lands * [180]; Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * [191]; Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment * [154].

Committee — Report — Third Reading — Westminster Abbey * [165], and *passed.*

Provisional Order Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough) * [192]; Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) * [193]; Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * [194].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER (MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the Imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

Athlone on Circuit,
March 23, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour, as is my duty, to inform you, that Mr. Patrick O'Brien, a Member of the Honourable The House of Commons, was this day sentenced by me, to be imprisoned for four months as a first-class misdemeanant, upon the hearing of an appeal from a Court of Summary Jurisdiction constituted under the Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act of 1887.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
William O'Connor Morris,
County Court Judge and Chairman
of Quarter Sessions,

QUESTIONS.

REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION.

Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can now state when the Bills relating to Reformatories and Industrial Schools will be introduced?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E): I hope that these Bills may be introduced shortly after Easter. Their production has been considerably delayed, owing to the great pressure of work in the office of the Parliamentary draftsman.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) (for Sir Richard Paget) (Somerset, Wells) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could conveniently present to the House, previous to the Easter Recess, a Memorandum, showing, in statistical form, the financial proposals made by him in introducing the Local Government Bill?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, a Statement had been prepared, and he hoped would be distributed to-morrow along with the Bill.

THE ALASKAN FISHERIES DISPUTES—THE SEAL FISHERIES.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is correct, as reported by cable from Victoria, British Columbia, that a number of Canadian sealing schooners have been permitted to clear for Behring's Sea with the intention of prosecuting seal fishing, contrary to the Regulations of the United States Alaskan Authorities, carrying large Indian crews for the purpose of waging war upon American Revenue Cutters, should their Commanders attempt to molest them; and, what measures Her Majesty's Government intend adopting for the purpose of arriving at an amicable solution of the Alaskan Fisheries disputes?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Governor General of Canada has stated, in reply to a telegraphic inquiry, that the rumour referred to by the hon. Member is not confirmed by any information, private or official, in possession of the Dominion Government, and is not credited by them. The question of a settlement of the Alaskan Fisheries disputes is now under the consideration of the two Governments concerned; but it would be premature at this moment to say more than that Her Majesty's Government have no reason to doubt that a satisfactory arrangement will be arrived at.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — NEW SCHOOL, CASTLEMARTYR, CO. CORK.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) (for Mr. LANE) (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government prevent the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland from carrying out their arrangement to make a grant towards building a new school in Castlemartyr, County Cork, as intimated in a letter (dated 8th March, 1888) from the Secretary to the Commissioners to the Rev. T. O'Connell, P.P.?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I understand that this case is one of several which the Commissioners of National Education have been unable to deal with in consequence of the funds applicable for payment of building grants for schools being exhausted. Such strong opinions were expressed in this House on the subject of these grants in connection with the recent Supplementary Estimate for them that Government felt bound to take the most imperative action to guard against further excesses. No doubt the case in which the hon. Member is interested will be taken up in its turn by the Commissioners when further funds are available.

MR. DEASY: Might I ask when the funds are likely to be available?

MR. JACKSON: I am afraid I cannot answer that question, because I do not know the order in which this particular case stands, and it would, therefore, be impossible for me to say when this particular case will be dealt with. But I may state to the hon. Member that pretty large provision has been made for the present year, and we hope that within a reasonable time the grants which have been made in excess of the provision already made by Parliament will be exhausted in due course.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND)—RETIREMENTS ON PENSIONS.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether Her Majesty's Government will consent to the insertion of a clause in the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill, providing for the voluntary retirement, on suitable pensions, of officers and clerks of the Probate and Matrimonial Division of the High Court of Justice, whose duties shall be changed, or on whom new duties shall be imposed, in the event of the Bill becoming Law?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The Government will not oppose the insertion of a clause in the Bill affording to the officers of the Probate and Matrimonial Division protection against the imposition of new duties similar to that contained in the 7th clause of the Bill with regard to officers attached to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) CORK WINTER ASSIZES—REFUSAL OF EXPENSES.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Has his attention been called to the letter in *The Freeman's Journal* of March 6, of Mrs. J. Hallinan, complaining that although herself and four Crown witnesses were served by Sergeant Murphy with subpœnas in Limerick to attend Cork Winter Assizes, where they were detained 10 days, the Crown Solicitor refused them any expenses, or to pay their train fare back to Limerick; and, if witnesses brought up by the Crown summons are not paid when their examination becomes unnecessary by a plea of guilty in the case?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): My attention has been called to the letter of Mrs. Hallinan by the Question of the hon. and learned Member, and the facts are as follow:—The trial (which was for riot and obstructing and assaulting the Sheriff) was first tried at the Summer Assizes in Limerick. No witnesses were examined on behalf of the prisoners, and the jury disagreed. The witnesses referred to were summoned for the second trial at the Winter Assizes in Cork; but not on behalf of the prosecution. They were served with Crown summonses to give evidence on behalf of the accused, obtained in the usual manner at the request of the prisoner. A statement having been made that no funds were available for bringing the witnesses to Cork, the Crown Solicitor caused their train fares to be paid. They were not detained by the Crown for any period. At the trial the accused pleaded guilty; and although they had been informed by notice that the Court would have power to order payment of the expenses of any *bonâ fide* witnesses for the defence no application was made to the Court for payment of the expenses in question. The prisoners were represented by counsel and solicitor. Under these circumstances, the refusal to pay the expenses of the witnesses was fully justified.

THE MAGISTRACY—CARDIFF MAGISTRATES—BOGUS CLUBS.

Mr. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to the fact that in the case of certain appeals from the decision of the Cardiff Stipendiary and other Borough Police Magistrates, with reference to Bogus Clubs, it had been reversed by five Glamorganshire County Magistrates at the last Quarter Sessions, who, while allowing the appeals with costs, threw the onus of proof of *bona fides* upon the prosecution contrary to to law, notwithstanding a decision of the Queen's Bench Division to the contrary, and refused to state a case for the opinion of the Court, either upon the point of law raised, or find as a fact, and refuse to state whether they found the Clubs in question were *bonâ fide* or not *bonâ fide;* and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into all the circumstances of the case?

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I wish to ask whether his attention has been called to the great increase in the number of Bogus Clubs for the sale of intoxicating liquors in Cardiff, and to the consequent increase of disorder and drunkenness?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Immediately I received Notice of this Question from the hon. Member (Mr. Thomas) I communicated with the Chairman of Quarter Sessions at Cardiff, and I have not yet received any reply from him. I have heard that the number of these Bogus Clubs has increased; but as my information is not very definite, I cannot say to what extent.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Has the right hon. Gentleman any information to the effect that recently these Clubs are being rapidly rooted out of Cardiff?

Mr. MATTHEWS: No Sir; I have not heard.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—STATISTICS.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, When the Returns of Judicial Rents for November, December, January, and February last will be distributed; and, why it is not possible to bring the presentation of these Returns more closely up to date?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin

University): The Return of Judicial Rents for the months of November and December was presented on February 22. As regards the Return dealing with the months of January and February, the Land Commissioners inform me that it is in the printers' hands and will shortly be ready for presentation. These Returns are made up every two months for Departmental convenience, and they are thereupon presented as soon as possible.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—NOTICES.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, What was the number of Notices under Section 7 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," issued between 1st January and 17th March, 1887?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): It has been arranged to present quarterly a Return of the Notices filed under Section 7 of the Land Act of last Session. The Return for the quarter ending the 31st day of this month will be presented as soon as possible. It would be inconvenient to obtain a Return for the broken period up to the 17th March; and I think that the hon. Member will find that his requirements are met by the presentation of the quarterly Return.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—ASSISTANTS OF EXCISE.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it has been called to his attention that the flow of promotion from assistants of Excise to second class officers has been materially checked, and that it now takes from seven and a-half to 10 years instead of five years, as estimated by the Secretary to the Treasury on the 12th of April, 1886; and that, at the present time, out of a total of 775 assistants of Excise no fewer than 450 have already served from five to seven and a-half years without being promoted; and, if he proposes to take any steps to reorganize the system by which this stagnation in promotion in the lower grades of this Service may be obviated?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): A similar Question was addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) on the 8th of September last, and I have nothing to add to the reply then given. I may, however, observe that it is clearly impossible to carry out any reorganization of a Public Department, with any intention of reducing expenditure, without affecting the rate of promotion in the junior ranks.

ARMY ACT, 1881—REQUISITIONS OF EMERGENCY — IMPRESSMENT OF HORSES, CARTS, &c.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police in Letterkenny, County Donegal, on the 27th of January last, seized a number of horses and carts belonging to farmers of the district whilst on their way to market with their produce for sale, and that without producing any warrant; whether the carts and horses were taken away by the police and the farmers' goods stored in hotel yards, the farmers being prevented from taking them out for sale; whether, among others, one Anthony Donnell, of Maghera, had his horse, cart, and load of flax seized; and, whether the flax was thrown into the yard of Miss Hegarty's hotel, the District Inspector refusing to allow the owner to take it to the market place, only 50 yards distant; if so, whether this was done with the sanction of the Authorities, and under what instructions or by what right?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: On the 27th of January the police at Letterkenny seized for the Military Authorities five carts and horses, two only of which belonged to farmers of the district, who had brought them to market with produce for sale. The produce consisted of flax and shrubs. It is not the case that this was done without producing any warrant. The police both produced and read the warrant to the parties before the seizures were made. No man of the name of Anthony Donnell appears to have had his horse, cart, or load of flax seized. In the case of the carts that were seized, the District Inspector several times requested the owners to remove the loads, or take them to any place in the town they desired. This they would not do. He therefore caused the loads to be removed and placed in a dry house, the owners being told they could have their goods at any time. The owners subsequently removed them.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Police Authorities in Donegal had previous to the 27th of January last, in accordance with section 114, sub-section (2), caused to be kept at some convenient place, and open for inspection at all reasonable times, a list of persons liable to furnish carriages and animals under the Army Act, 1881; and, whether the orders given by constables for furnishing carriages and animals have been made from such list in regular rotation, in accordance with sub-section (3) of the same section?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he might answer both paragraphs of the Question in the affirmative.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in January last the Lord Lieutenant, by Order, distinctly stating that a case of emergency existed, and signified by him or the Under Secretary, authorized any Field Officer commanding the Forces in County Donegal to issue a requisition of emergency; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of such Order upon the Table; whether the officer so authorized issued such requisition; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of the same upon the Table; and, whether a Justice of the Peace on such requisition issued his warrant for the provision of carriages and animals?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Lord Lieutenant did in January last issue an Emergency Order, signified by the Under Secretary, authorizing the issue of a requisition of emergency by the General Officer commanding the Forces in County Donegal. The officer so authorized did issue such requisition. The Government do not see that, as a matter of practice, any public purpose would be served by laying a Copy of these documents upon the Table, the terms of which will be found in the 115th section of the Army Act of 1881. A Justice of the Peace did issue a warrant on such requisition for the provision of carriages and animals.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say whether the requisition and warrant in question were issued before or after the seizure?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Before.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Colonel Kinloch, in command of the 60th Rifles in Donegal, in January last, some days after the seizure of a number of carts and horses in and about Letterkenny for the conveyance of the military to Dunfanaghy, between 20 and 30 miles away, sent word to the owners that their vehicles and animals were at stabling in Dunfanaghy, and that after one day from the date of his communication they would remain at livery, subject to the owners' risk, and to payment by them of the charges for keep; whether this is a proper discharge according to the official interpretation of the Army Act; and, what amount of compensation or hire was paid to Anthony Donnell, of Maghera, in respect of his vehicle and horses seized on the occasion referred to?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Horses and carts were impressed for the conveyance of baggage to Dunfanaghy in January last. Several of the drivers absconded *en route*, and their carts and horses were driven to Dunfanaghy by soldiers. As soon as the officer commanding found that the carts were no longer required he sent word to the owners that they could take them away; and that if they failed to do so the animals would stand at livery at the owners' risk and expense. A compensation was paid to those drivers who accompanied their carts. As the drivers—the owners' servants—voluntarily abandoned their employers' horses and vehicles, I am advised that the course taken by Colonel Kinloch would be considered a reasonable discharge by a County Court Judge acting under section 115 (4) of the Army Act. Anthony Donnell was, on the 2nd of February last, paid 11*s*., being at the rate of ½*d*. per cwt. per mile, going and returning. As the driver abandoned the cart at Letterkenny no compensation for detention was paid to him.

THEATRES BILL—LEGISLATION—THE FIRE AT OPORTO.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, having regard to the destruction of another theatre by fire at Oporto, where a great number of lives have been lost, he can state when it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce their Theatres Bill, to diminish, as much as possible, the risk of such accidents in England?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The Government have decided not to introduce a Bill on this subject.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND inquired whether, that being so, the Government would no longer continue to block his Bill.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I can give no undertaking to my hon. Friend on this subject.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL —PRODUCTION OF STOCK CERTIFICATES.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has seen the notice issued by the Bank of England requiring all holders of Three per Cent Stock, Consols, and Reduced Three per Cents, to lodge their Stock certificate by a certain day, whether they dissent or assent; whether he is aware that the production of such certificates has never been usual when Stock has been sold or transferred, but simply identification of the party by a broker, and that such Stock certificates, being looked on as valueless, are often put away with papers; and, if he will consider whether it may not prevent many persons expressing their wishes, if they cannot do so except by production of such receipts?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Gentleman's Question is based on a misconception. The notice only applies to Stock certificates to bearer, which constitute the sole title to the Stock to which they refer, and not, as he appears to think, to Stock receipts, which are given when inscribed Stock is transferred, and which have no negotiable value.

IRELAND — REGISTRY OF DEEDS OFFICE, DUBLIN.

Mr. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Report of the Treasury Committee appointed to inquire into the system and procedure of the Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin, and dated the 22nd of December, 1885, has been considered by the Treasury; whether the Report contains certain recommendations for the simplification of the existing system, which will reduce the cost of transacting the business of the Office; and, what steps are being taken by the Treasury towards giving effect to these recommendations?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that a Bill is being prepared, and will be introduced after the Easter holidays, giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee which inquired into the registration of deeds in Ireland in the autumn of 1885.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—ROYAL SMALL ARMS FACTORY, ENFIELD.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that a number of men are again working overtime at the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield; and, if so, whether he will state the reasons for an increase of such overtime?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: About 120 men worked 10 hours a-week overtime for six weeks from February 1 at the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, for the purpose of starting the manufacture of the trial order of 350 magazine rifles.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)— BETHNAL GREEN.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, When the Report of the Commissioners who held an inquiry into the sanitary condition of Bethnal Green will be laid upon the Table of this House?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said, the Report had been received, and would be laid before Parliament at once.

ARMY MEDICAL STAFF CORPS—RECRUITS.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is a fact that a General Order has recently been issued to officers of the Army Medical Staff Corps restricting the height of recruits for the Corps to the minimum of 5 feet 3 inches; whether an important portion of the duty allocated to the men of the said Corps is to act as litter bearers for the purpose of carrying the wounded men out of action; and, what was the previous minimum standard of height for recruits?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The standard of height of recruits for all the Departmental Corps has been fixed at from 5 feet 3 inches to 5 feet 5 inches. The object of this restriction is to tap, for these non-combatant corps, a stratum of the population of good and often powerful physique. It is not apprehended that there will be any difficulty as to bearers. The previous minimum height was 5 feet 4 inches.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL—CHARITY TRUSTEES.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will be prepared to state before the Recess what time will be given to the Trustees of Charities, under Regulations to be issued by the Treasury, within which they may express their dissent from the conversion of Stock, should they desire in any case to dissent?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As regards the New Threes no Regulations need be laid down by the Treasury, for the 7th clause of the Bill provides that dissent must be signified by the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds at the request of the Trustees or persons acting in the administration of the Charity to which the Stock belongs, if at all, on or before the 12th of April next. As regards Consols and Reduced Threes, the Regulations will fix June 1 as the latest date by which assents may be sent in in respect of Charitable Trusts; but power will be reserved to treat exceptional cases exceptionally.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION IN TRALEE—MRS. BEHANE.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the case of Mrs. Behane, Ballymacaquin Dorney, County Kerry, entered for hearing in September last, does not appear on the list of cases to be heard before the next Sub-Commission sitting in Tralee, though other cases from the same townland and on the same property entered at the same time are listed?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Land Commissioners informed him that the cases listed at the next sittings at Tralee of the Land Sub-Commission will be confined to applications received up to the 27th of November, which embraced already as many cases as the Sub-Commission could be reasonably expected to get through. The originating notice in the case of Mrs. Behane was not received until the 29th of December, after the list of cases had been fixed for the next sittings, and, therefore, could not appear in the present list.

ADMIRALTY—H.M.S. "WASP."

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If it is correct that the gunboat *Wasp*, designed and built with very high bulwarks, was sent to sea with deck ports insufficient for the escape (when breaking on board) of heavy seas from the decks; whether this defect has been rectified in gunboats of similar type; and, by whose instructions a vessel constructed primarily for inshore and river service was sent to sea during the typhoon season?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): No; the freeing scuttles of the *Wasp* were exceptionally numerous, and of a large relative area. On the suggestion of the naval officers at the ports where they were fitting out, some additional freeing scuttles have been cut in vessels of similar type; but they were not considered necessary for the safety of the vessel. The *Wasp* was constructed for the general requirements of the service at sea, and to encounter any weather to which she might have been exposed; and not, as the hon. Member implies, for river service.

POST OFFICE--RATES FOR RE-POSTED AUSTRALIAN AND COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is he aware that any Australian or other Colonial newspaper that is posted direct from the Colonies to England at a cost of 1d. postage is, if re-posted in this country, charged double the rates fixed for English newspapers, and that these Australian newspapers are stamped "Foreign," and a further charge is made by the English Post Office if these newspapers are posted without the double fee?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have to state that a Colonial newspaper re-directed to the same person, but at another address, in this country is, if it has not been opened, not charged for re-direction; but if re-posted to another person it is liable to the book rate of postage, as the privilege rate conferred by the Newspaper Act of 1870 applies only to newspapers printed and published in this country. Many Colonial newspapers do not, I believe, exceed two ounces in weight, in which case the prepaid book rate would be ½*d.* only.

POST OFFICE—POSTAGE FROM DELAGOA BAY — SURCHARGES BY THE CAPE POST OFFICE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is he aware that, notwithstanding the fact that the postage from here to Delagoa Bay, East Africa, is 4*d.* and 5*d.* according to the route, yet letters posted at Delagoa Bay to England, bearing the full rate in Mozambique postage stamps, are surcharged the full rates from the Cape, through having to pass through the Cape Post Office, and are, in fact, treated as unpaid letters at Cape Town; has his attention been called to the matter by the Secretary of the Post Office, and to a letter, signed A. Blackwood, registered No. 1,782, dated 16th March, 1888; and, has he taken action to remedy the grievance complained of, considering the rapid advance being made by England in Mozambique territory through the Delagoa Bay Railway?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The rates of postage on letters sent hence to Delagoa Bay are those stated by the hon. Member. I am aware that letters posted at Delagoa Bay for England which have been transmitted through the Cape Colony, although bearing the Mozambique postage stamp, have been surcharged by the Cape Post Office, for the reason that no part of the postage represented by the foreign stamps was accounted for to the Cape Post Office for the duty imposed upon it of carrying the letters through the Colony to Cape Town and thence by packet to England. The inconvenience has arisen through the action of the Delagoa Bay Post Office in sending its letters through the Cape Colony without preconcerted arrangement. The matter has lately formed the subject of correspondence between the Imperial and Colonial Post Offices, and I have no doubt will be satisfactorily arranged.

WAR OFFICE—SERGEANT INSTRUCTOR J. ELLIOTT.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Sergeant Instructor J. Elliott, after 18 years' service as a First Class Sergeant Instructor, and 12 years' service in the Rifle Brigade, on the 6th of July, 1886, applied for his discharge from the 1st Cinque Ports R.V.C., and also for leave of absence; whether, by Battalion Orders, dated 3rd July, 1886, and signed by Major C. H. W. Cafe, Adjutant of the 1st Cinque Ports R.V.C., the discharge certificate of Sergeant Elliott was confirmed for the 6th of July, and whether by the same Orders he was struck off the strength of the Battalion from the 7th of July; whether on his return from leave of absence, and after his discharge had been received, he was, on the 16th of July, placed under arrest and deprived of his pay, until he threatened to go with his wife and family to the workhouse; and whether the reason alleged was because he refused to make himself responsible for irregularities in the matter of recording drills committed by a sergeant appointed to do his duties during his absence; whether the War Office received a letter from Sergeant Elliott, dated the 14th of July, 1886, Ticehurst, and addressed to the Adjutant General, War Office, London, and whether the War Office, in consequence of the said letter, gave any, and what, instructions in the matter; whether, on the 23rd of

July, 1886, Major Cafe cancelled the discharge of Sergeant Elliott, and whether that was done in order to attempt to justify his arrest, and by whose orders, and on what authority, the discharge was cancelled; and, whether Sergeant Elliott was subsequently discharged a second time, and whether any, and what, redress will be made for the placing under arrest and depriving of his pay under the above circumstances of a man over whom the Military Authorities had at the time no authority?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Sergeant Instructor Elliott, of the 1st Cinque Ports R.V.C., did apply for his discharge and also for leave of absence. His discharge was confirmed for the 6th of July, and he was ordered to be struck off the strength from the 7th. On the 6th of July, however, before his discharge had been completed by handing to him his parchment certificate—and I may say that a soldier remains subject to military law till he receives his parchment certificate—he was ordered to fill up and complete his drill attendance book. This he refused to do, and, consequently, his discharge was suspended, and the matter reported to the General Officer commanding the District, who, on July 16, placed him under arrest and cancelled the order for his discharge. Sergeant Elliott subseqently expressed in writing his regret for his disobedience of orders, and begged his Commanding Officer to take a lenient view of his case for the sake of his wife and family, and in consideration of his long service. The General Officer commanding the District accepted this expression of regret, ordered his release from arrest, and approved of his discharge. A letter from Sergeant Elliott, dated the 14th of July, was received at the War Office, and an inquiry into the case was at once instituted.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) — FIRST - CLASS PRISONS—SALARIES OF PRINCIPAL CHAPLAINS.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) asked the Lord Advocate, If it is a fact that the principal chaplains at the three first-class prisons in Scotland —namely, Perth, Glasgow, and Barbirnie—are paid salaries at a lower rate than the assistant chaplains in England; and, f so, whether he can give any explanation of this anomaly?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said, it was not the case that assistant chaplains in the ordinary prisons in England received more than the principal chaplains in the first-class prisons in Scotland; but the assistant chaplains in convict prisons in England started at a higher rate than chaplains of those prisons in Scotland which were referred to by the hon. Member, and rose to the same rate —namely, £300. As there were at present no purely convict prisons in Scotland, there was no such anomaly as was suggested in the latter part of the Question.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR gave Notice that he would call attention to this matter on the Civil Service Estimates.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked, if it was not the case that the assistant chaplains in England began at £250, while the chaplains in Scotland began with £200?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON said, he believed that was the case.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885 —SALE OF THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY'S ESTATES.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the letter from the Marquess of Londonderry, dated 20th February, 1888, to his tenants in County Down, urging them to purchase their holdings from him "at 20 years' purchase of their present rent," and the fact that none of the applications for fair rents from the Marquess of Londonderry's tenants have been entered for hearing at the sitting of the Land Court in that district in May next, he will take care that no loan of public money is sanctioned to complete purchases to which the Marquess of Londonderry's tenants may be induced to agree until a full opportunity has been afforded them of having their applications heard and fair rents judicially decreed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that no application for advances on the Marquess of Londonderry's estate have been received. It has always been the practice of the Land Commissioners that whenever an agreement for sale is signed by a tenant and has been lodged, they satisfy themselves of the security, and provisionally sanction the advance, to allow the tenant a month from the date of such sanction, in which he may apply to stay proceedings. The views and practice of the Land Commissioners in such cases were fully explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Tuesday last, in answer to a Question from the hon. Member.

SCOTCH FISHERIES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the intention of the Government to deal with the question of Scotch Fisheries during the present Session, and, in particular, whether it is intended by Government to bring in any measure dealing with the question of trawling and mussel beds; and, if not, whether opportunity will be given to private Members who have Bills before the House dealing with the questions referred to?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson) (Bute) (who replied) said: The Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with salmon fisheries in Scotland; but if the hon. Member referred only to sea fisheries, and particularly to trawling and mussel beds, the Government do not propose to introduce a Bill dealing with those matters, although inquiry has been, and is being, made into them. As regards the last part of the Question, the opportunity of discussing proposals of private matters must depend on the time at the disposal of the House; but if the hon. Gentleman desires to address any further inquiry, it should be to the Leader of the House.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked, if the Government had asked the Scotch Fishery Board to express their opinion as to whether further legislation was desirable?

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON asked that Notice be given of the Question.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE BATH MAGISTRATES.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a decision of the Bath Magistrates given last Monday (19th March) in which a man named John Sartoris was sent to prison for one month for cutting and carrying away two hazel sticks, the value of which could not be more than 2*d.*; whether he will require the depositions in the case to be sent to him; and, whether he will take the case into his consideration?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) (in reply) said, he had received a Report from the Magistrates on this case, and he had received the depositions, which showed that the man had stolen two saplings of three years' growth, valued at 1*s.*, out of an enclosed private garden, thus spoiling a row of trees. There were no less than 22 convictions against the prisoner, several of them for similar offences. Certainly he did not consider it a case in which to interfere with the sentence.

DOG LICENCE—OFFICERS OF INLAND REVENUE.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether officers of Inland Revenue are permitted to keep dogs without paying a licence; and, whether an Inland Revenue officer is acting within his legal right in so doing?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The answer is, No, Sir.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—PIER AT ROSSCARBERY.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the estimated cost of the new pier at Rosscarbery, County Cork; whether the work is completed; what was the term fixed by contract for its completion; for how many years has the building been going on; whether the first severe storm to which it has been subjected has severely damaged the structure, sweeping away many of the blocks of stone and concrete; and, whether the County Surveyor has taken over the pier from the Board of Works?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I am informed that the estimated cost of the pier referred to is £4,000. The work was commenced in January, 1885, and the contract provided for completion in November of that year. Four blocks were removed and others damaged by the severe storm of January last; but the injury has been repaired. The work is now practically complete, but has not yet been transferred to the county.

ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS—THE RETIRED LIST.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Army Medical Officers of the Retired List re-employed will receive the same pay, allowances, and military status as other officers of their rank; and, whether their additional service will count for increased pension when compulsorily retired by age; and, if not, what advantages they will derive?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: As regards pay and allowances, the Regulations limit the payment to a retired medical officer to £150, in addition to his retired pay. As regards military status, such officers are entitled, under certain restrictions, to the rank and position which they held in the Army Medical Department before their retirement. They do not count service subsequent to retirement towards increase of pension.

ADMIRALTY—SHEERNESS DOCKYARD —DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, in addition to the 25 men who are to be discharged on the 31st instant from the Boiler Making Department in Sheerness Dockyard, a further discharge of 45 men is contemplated; and, whether, since some of the men have worked upwards of 20 years in the Yard, he would consider if this step could be avoided by giving some of the iron work for the new ships to be constructed to be done in the boiler shops?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) (who replied) said: Owing to the falling off of the amount of boiler work at Sheerness Dockyard a further discharge of about 45 men will be necessary. Should extra hands be required in the Constructor's Department for work on shipbuilding, consideration will be given to such of the discharged men as are qualified for the work, and are prepared to accept the rates of pay given for work of that class.

RED SEA PORTS—PORT TRUST AT ADEN.

MR. T. SUTHERLAND (Greenock) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What prospect there is of the early establishment of a Port Trust at Aden, charged with powers to execute the much needed improvements in that Port, in conformity with the Act recently passed by the Bombay Legislature for this purpose?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): In reply to a telegram of the 17th instant, the Government of India have informed the Secretary of State that this matter is under consideration.

SCOTLAND — THE HIGHLANDS — THE FREE CHURCH CONFERENCE AT DINGWALL.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the Conference of Free Church Ministers and Laymen at Dingwall regarding the present condition of the Highlands, and the Resolutions passed by the Conference; and, whether the Government intend doing anything in reference to the matter?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said, the Secretary for Scotland had seen a newspaper report of a meeting held at Dingwall on the 23rd of February, to which he presumed the hon. Member referred. Some of the matters referred to—such as fishery loans, harbours, postal communication, &c.—had already been dealt with. The whole question of the condition of the crofters, as the hon. Gentleman was probably aware, was engaging the anxious attention of the Government.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS AT WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will inquire into the cause of the delay in fixing the rents of four tenants of Park Ashford, County Wicklow; whether it is true, that on hearing the landlord's appeal from the decision of the Sub-Commissioners, the Chief Commissioner stated that a Court Valuer would be sent to value the land, which has not been done; and, when the tenants may expect to have their rents decided on?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners assume that this Question has reference to four cases on the estate of Mr. Gunn Cuninghame, whose appeal against the decision of the Sub-Commission was heard by them in January last, and referred to two Court Valuers to report upon. The Report of the Valuers has been delayed, in consequence of the holdings being covered with snow on two several occasions when they proceeded to inspect. The Commissioners hope to be able to give their decision in these cases within the course of a few weeks.

SCOTLAND — RIOT AT CLASHMORE PARK—CASE OF HUGH MATHESON.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Secretary for Scotland has taken steps to test the accuracy of the five statutory declarations received by him on the 15th instant, emitted by inhabitants of Clashmore, testifying that during the riot at Clashmore Park, for participation in which Hugh Matheson is now undergoing 12 months' imprisonment, Matheson was in the house of Hector Mackenzie at a distance from the scene of the riot; and, if an inquiry has been instituted, when he expects to be able to announce its result?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said, inquiry was being made into this matter, and it was hoped information would be received in a few days. It would at once be considered by the Secretary for Scotland.

SOUTH AFRICA—NATIVE POPULATION OF NATAL.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is an approximately correct estimate to place the Native population of Natal at about 400,000, of which about 150,000 are on Native locations, 50,000 on Crown lands, and 200,000 on private farms; whether the owners of private farms are now, to a large extent, fencing in their farms, and turning away the great bulk of the Native squatters; whether these squatters possess about 250,000 head of stock; whether troubles have already occurred in consequence of the Natives being turned away and the farms fenced in; and, whether the Government will place locations in Zululand at the disposal of the Natal Government, in order that the Native squatters, when turned off farms, may be able to return to Zululand?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The hon. Member is probably right in estimating the present Native population of Natal at 400,000; but the proportion of those living on private lands is believed to be not more than 175,000, if so many, and to be less than that of those living on locations. The number of their horned stock is probably about 200,000. The land difficulty to which the hon. Member refers in the second and fourth paragraphs of his Question has been known to exist for several years; but it is believed that the difficulty is less serious than he appears to suggest. It is impossible at present to say whether locations could be found in Zululand for Natives wishing to quit Natal; but if it should hereafter be found that there is a surplus of land in Zululand beyond the requirements of the Native population there would be no objection to the migration of Natal Natives.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY AT CHIPPING NORTON.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the organized attacks upon the Salvation Army at Chipping Norton by a gang of persons known there by the name of the "Skeleton Army," who form processions behind a coffin and attack the Salvationists on their way to their place of meeting; if he is aware that on Saturday, 10th March, a Salvationist named Betteridge and several women were knocked down and indecently assaulted in the open streets, and that similar scenes took place on Sunday 11th March and Monday 12th March; if he is aware that the Salvation Army have repeatedly appealed to the police for protection, and been refused, the police standing by declining to interfere when called upon, and that a special appeal to Captain Owen, the Superintendent of the County Police, was made by the Salvationist leaders for protection against the Skeleton Army on the 19th instant, to which he replied on the 21st, refusing to interfere; and, will he at once instruct Captain Owen to afford to these persons the protection against ill-treatment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I referred the written statement which the hon. Member sent me on this subject to the Chief Constable of Oxfordshire, who informs me that the facts therein alleged are greatly exaggerated. The Superintendent of Police at Norton states that if the assaults referred to have taken place it has not been in view of the police. Neither himself nor any of the police under him have been asked to take anyone into custody. I do not gather from the letter of the Chief Constable of the 21st instant that he refused to interfere; but he said it was not possible for him to provide a police guard for the processionists. He informs me that he has only four men at Norton; and he cannot, without great inconvenience to the rest of the county, provide more. If there is any ground for saying that the Chief Constable has been remiss in his duty, complaint should be made to the Justices in Quarter Sessions, under whose authority he acts.

INLAND REVENUE (EXCISE DIVISION)—ASSISTANT CLERKS.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If there will be any examination for the position of assistant clerks in the Excise Division of the Inland Revenue in May next, as usual; if not, will he order that candidates who are within the limit of age at the usual date shall be eligible for the next examination whenever it may take place?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: No examination for admission into the Excise will be held in May next, as there will not be any vacancies then existing, or in prospect, to which the successful candidates at such an examination could be appointed. I think it would be extremely undesirable to hold examinations when there is no prospect of the successful candidates being found employment.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — SUBMARINE MINERS, MERSEY DIVISION.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is true that Captain Montgomery, of the 1st Cheshire Engineer Volunteers, who has been gazetted Major of the Mersey Division of the Submarine Miners, has had no experience in submarine mining, engineering, or yachting, whilst Captain Beloe, his senior officer, was willing to accept the appointment, and that Captain Beloe is a civil engineer by profession, has been two months at Chatham in the Submarine Mining Department, three years in the Submarine Mining Service as a Volunteer, and is an experienced yachtsman; and, if it be so, would he explain why has Captain Beloe been superseded?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Yes, Sir; Captain Montgomery, of the 1st Cheshire Engineer Volunteers, has been gazetted Major of the Mersey Division of Submarine Miners. Captain Beloe was not appointed to the command of the corps, because, in the opinion of the Commanding Royal Engineer and of the General Officer commanding the Northern District, his appointment would not have been for the interest of the Service.

CYPRUS—THE ANNUAL TRIBUTE.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have received any communications from officers who have administered the government of Cyprus, urging that the inhabitants should be released from the annual Tribute now paid to the Governments of England and France, and that more money should be spent on public works in the Island; and, whether he will lay such Reports upon the Table of the House? The hon. Gentleman also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that, on the 27th of December last, a mass meeting was held at Nicosia, the Capital of Cyprus, at which Resolutions were passed, asking for relief from taxation, and condemning the system under which an annual payment of £99,000 was made out of the Taxes to England and France; whether the Resolutions were presented to the High Commissioner by the Archbishop for transmission to the Colonial Office; and, whether he will lay the Resolutions upon the Table of the House, together with the answer of the Secretary of State for the Colonies?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Certain proposals have, from time to time, been made by officers administering the government of Cyprus for lightening the burden of the Tribute by commutation, not by abolition. A larger expenditure on public works has been urged, as will be seen by reference to Parliamentary Paper, C 3,661, of 1883; but it was decided by the then Secretary of State that the annual expenditure on this head should be limited to £13,000. As regards the next Question, meetings have been held in different districts of the Island and Resolutions passed embodying the views of those present in regard to the state of affairs; but in those Resolutions the question of the Tribute and its present destination was not mentioned. There will be no objection to presenting the Correspondence; but it will be more convenient to include it in a collection of general Correspondence relating to the affairs of the Island, which is in course of preparation.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT—RABBIT COURSING.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged cruelties at so-called "rabbit coursing" matches in enclosed spaces, as set forth in correspondence in *The Standard* of the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd instant; and, whether it has been held that such practices do not come within the Cruelty to Animals Act; and, if so, whether the Government will take steps to amend the Law so as to prevent the continuance of such coursing?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have read the newspaper correspondence to which the hon. Member has referred. A decision of the Court of Queen's Bench certainly appears to show that the facts, as alleged, are not an infringement of the Statute for the prevention of cruelty to animals. It is a matter for consideration whether the law can be amended. Meanwhile, I hope that public opinion will be strong enough to check practices which cannot, by any stretch of language, be considered "sport."

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL FOR DISEASES OF THE SKIN.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the constant charges in the public Press of the wilful misappropriation of the funds of St. John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin; whether he is aware that no legal action has been taken against any of the members and late members of the Board of Management making such charges; and, whether, at the present time, an appeal for funds is being made, and their receipt publicly acknowledged, on behalf of the Hospital; if so, whether he will instruct the Public Prosecutor to take action in the matter, with a view to protect the public from possible fraud?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a letter from the authorities of the Hospital, who inform me that an action for libel is now pending, at their instance, against a weekly journal with reference to the charges in question. It is true that subscriptions are now being received and publicly acknowledged. On the 18th of January the subscribers, at a special general meeting, passed, by an overwhelming majority, a vote of confidence in the Board of Management. I can discover no reason which would justify interference on my part.

POST OFFICE—THE "NEWSPAPER TRAIN" FOR EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW.

Mr. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Postmaster General, Whether a train, known as the newspaper train, which conveyed mails and newspapers to London and other parts of England from Edinburgh and Glasgow, leaving those cities at 6 o'clock in the morning, has been stopped, because of the refusal of the Post Office to make a small payment, which would have enabled the train to be continued; and, whether, the train being stopped, there is any Mail Service which enables letters posted early in the morning in Scotland to be delivered the same day in London?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): A train leaving Edinburgh and Glasgow for the South at 6 a.m., which I believe was largely employed by the newspaper publishers for the conveyance of their train parcels, and by which mail bags were also forwarded, was not long since discontinued; and it is the case that the Government was not prepared to make such a payment in respect to the mail service as would have secured the continuance of the train. The train in question left Edinburgh and Glasgow too early to be generally available for letters posted early in the morning, and its chief utility was in conveying letters posted during the night. There is no train now running by which the same facilities can be afforded.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT — LABOURERS' COTTAGES, ARDEE UNION.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the cause of the delay in the erection of the labourers' cottages in the Castlebellingham Electoral Division of the Ardee Union, in the county of Louth, the scheme for which was passed at the Local Government Board Inquiry held in October, 1886; and, whether he will take steps to prevent further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, that the scheme for the erection of the labourers' cottages referred to had been duly sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and had also come before the Privy Council. It appeared, from the Minutes of the Guardians, that they were now in communication with the Land Commissioners with a view to having the rent fixed, as the lands were to be taken for a term of years.

MR. T. P. GILL: Might I ask who is the landlord?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: That is not on the Question.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. KILKELLY, R.M.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Captain Walsh, R.M., has been appointed over the head of Mr. Kilkelly, R.M.; whether Mr. Kilkelly is the magistrate who refused to agree with Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., in the severe sentences he proposed to inflict on certain prisoners charged in connection with the Bodyke evictions; would he state to the House on what ground was Mr. Kilkelly passed over for promotion; and, whether the seniority list of Resident Magistrates has not appeared in the "Constabulary List" for 40 years till this year?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Captain Walsh was promoted to be a second class Resident Magistrate in January last. As regards seniority, his claims were practically identical with those of Mr. Kilkelly. With reference to the general question, and having no regard to the merits of this case, I may say that successive Governments have laid down the rule—and it has been recognized by almost every Department of the Public Service—that seniority is only to be taken into account where other claims are equal, and, failing such equality, preference is to be given to merit and capacity. Mr. Kilkelly is the magistrate who refused to concur in the sentences referred to. As to the seniority list, it was merely a temporary list, and one purely for Departmental purposes; and as it is not now required for these purposes it has been discontinued.

FORESTRY—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What course Her Majesty's Government propose to take with reference to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Forestry, which sat last year?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government have not yet come to any decision in regard to the recommendations of the Select Committee, and the question is one that will have to be dealt with by the Agricultural Department.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—LEGISLATION.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is able to state when the promised Bill will be introduced for the creation of an independent Agricultural Department?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Bill is in a forward state, and I hope it will be possible to introduce it shortly after Easter.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — OFFICE OF HIGH SHERIFF.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, taking into consideration the altered circumstances and the great changes proposed under the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, Her Majesty's Government will introduce a Bill this Session to discontinue the office of High Sheriff in its present form?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): A Committee of the House of Lords has been appointed to inquire into the duties and obligations of High Sheriffs; and the Government will await the Report of that Committee before they proceed with any legislation upon the question.

PUBLIC WORKS AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) (SPECIAL GRANT).

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How much of the £50,000 allotted last year to Ireland, as an equivalent for the contributions to local funds given in Great Britain, has been spent, or it is estimated will be spent, before the close of the financial year; how much of this has been spent on preliminary surveys, and how much in actual work or in subsidies to the owners of sires; and, if the unexpended balance will be credited to Ireland, and spent on local works in the ensuing year, or, as in England, handed over to Local Authorities to diminish the county cess?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) (who replied) said: Of the £50,000 voted last year for public works and industries in Ireland £13,500, being in the nature of grants in aid of various fishing, technical, and agricultural schools, and to the Royal Dublin Society for the improvement of the breed of horses, has been paid over to the Institutions entitled to receive them. Owing to the date at which the Vote was taken it has been found impossible to spend the £6,500 provided for piers and roads in Galway and Mayo, and it is proposed to revoke the sum this year, as it must now be surrendered to the Exchequer. Of the £30,000 provided for surveys and works on the Shannon, Barrow, and Bann, it is anticipated that about £17,000 will have been spent by the 31st instant—namely, £10,500 (about) for works, and the remainder on salaries, surveys, and the preparation of Bills. The unexpended balance of £13,000 must be surrendered to the Exchequer; but it is proposed not only to take a re-Vote for this amount, but also to ask for a further sum of £6,500 for additional works. The total amount included in next year's Estimates for this service represents all that can be usefully spent on the three rivers in the year without further legislation.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —THE EDUCATION CODE, 1888.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that the Scotch Education Code for 1888 was only laid on the Table of the House on the 6th of March, that it was distributed to Members on the 20th of March, and was, therefore, not received by any of the important School Boards in Scotland until the 21st of March, he would, in view of the fact that the only day after the Easter holidays when the subject of the Code could be discussed would be the first day after the House met, postpone the date of its coming into force from the 6th to the 13th of April?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had received very short Notice of the Question, and had not an opportunity of communicating with the Department; but he would endeavour to give effect to the wish expressed in the Question; and he had very little doubt, unless there was some overwhelming Departmental difficulty, that the Code would not come into operation till the 13th of April. He would do all he could in the matter.

Mr. SINCLAIR said, there was not only the question of the Code coming into operation, but there was also the question of raising a discussion in the House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH pointed out that if the Code did not come into operation till the 13th there would be the greater interval during which to find an opportunity for discussion.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Bill would be distributed to-morrow morning?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) replied in the affirmative. He had thought it would be convenient for those hon. Gentlemen who intended leaving town before the Bill could be distributed in ordinary course that they should be able to get copies before the usual time of distribution. He had made arrangements for a limited number of Bills to be in the Vote Office before the Sitting closed this evening.

ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) wished to ask a Question of the First Lord of the Treasury as to the course of Business after the Recess. It had been stated that on the Thursday Civil Service Votes and ordinary Motions in Supply would be taken; but he should like to be informed concerning the Business that would be taken on Monday?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that the right hon. Gentleman was quite accurate as to his forecast as to Thursday, and the Government hoped to be able to make progress in Supply on that day and Friday. He would, however, state positively to-morrow whether any Business but Supply would be taken on Monday.

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked whether the Vote for the Admiralty Buildings would be taken on Thursday after the House re-assembled?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the Government proposed to defer that particular Vote. It would not be taken without sufficient Notice.

In reply to Mr. Channing (Northampton, E.),

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, it would not be possible to take the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill until after the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill had been read a second time.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked what Business would be taken to-morrow?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: We hope to move one or two unimportant Bills a stage; but the particular Business will be the Adjournment.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he proposed to take the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill on the Friday night after the Recess; and if he intended to make any statement concerning it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he did propose to do so, and also to make an explanatory statement; and if the House would allow him, he saw no reason why it should not be made after 12 o'clock.

POST OFFICE—THE POSTAL UNION—THE SOUTH AFRICAN COLONIES.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Postmaster General, If there was any probability of the South African Colonies coming into the Postal Union?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, he was afraid he could not hold out any hopes in that direction. The South African Colonies had been occasionally sounded on the subject; but at present they did not see their way to joining.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS — FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—COMMITTEE.

Ways and Means—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee)

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Courtney, in rising to make the usual Financial Statement of the year, I feel that I have need of the special indulgence of the House, because, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I stand in a somewhat exceptional position this year through the introduction of the Local Government Bill. Generally it falls to the lot of the Chancellor of the Exchequer simply to have to consider the claims of the taxpayers where there is an opportunity for remission of taxation; but upon this occasion the claims of the ratepayers have also to be considered; and I find that I have—if I may use the phrase—a double set of clients—namely, the taxpayers and the ratepayers. I do not believe there is any antagonism of interest between the two.

Most of the taxpayers are ratepayers, and most of the ratepayers are taxpayers, so I hope that there will be no jealousy with regard to the relief which may be extended to either the one or the other of those two classes who contribute equally to public purposes, although the one class contribute to the Imperial and the other to the local purse. The ground over which I shall have to travel is wider, therefore, than it usually is; and I trust that on that account the Committee will permit me to pass, perhaps with more rapidity than in an ordinary year, over some of the details which it is customary for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to submit on these occasions.

I commence, as usual, with making a statement in regard to the Expenditure of the past year, or rather the present year. And here I must certainly say that we are placed at some disadvantage, because the Financial Statement has to be made a week before the conclusion of the financial year. I shall give the best estimate I can with regard both to the Revenue and the Expenditure of the year, and the Civil servants who deal with these matters are so experienced that I doubt whether there will be much difference between the figures which I shall lay before the Committee and the final figures which will be submitted to Parliament. But it must be remembered that the figures, which I now give, are, as regards the last week of the financial year, an estimate only.

I take first the Exchequer issues for Expenditure, and hon. Members will be able to compare them with the Estimates, if they will look to page 2 of the Papers issued on this occasion. The total Exchequer issues will be £27,972,000 under the head of Consolidated Fund Charges, or an excess of about £44,000 over the Estimate. This excess is due to an issue somewhat beyond what we put down for the year for the Localization of the Forces Fund. It is not an extra expenditure, but rather an anticipation of what, in the ordinary course, would have been spent in 1888-9, and it is a not unsatisfactory item, because it brings our outlay for this purpose practically to an end.

I will now go through the various items of Supply. The Army expenditure will be £18,167,000, as compared with the total Estimate of £18,394,000, showing a saving of £227,000. The Navy issues will be £12,326,000, showing a saving of £151,000. The Civil Service Miscellaneous issues will be £18,210,000, showing a saving of £52,000 as compared with the Budget Estimate, and of £241,000 as compared with the total estimated Expenditure, including the Supplementary Estimates. The expenditure of the Post Office will be £5,403,000, showing a saving of £18,000. The expenditure of the Telegraph Service will be £1,240,000, showing a saving of £10,000. The Packet Service issues will be £698,000, showing a saving of £1,000. For the Customs and Inland Revenue the amount will be £2,708,000, showing a saving of £8,000. For the total Supply Services the amount is £59,452,000, showing a saving of £467,000 as compared with the Budget Estimate, and of £656,000 as compared with the total estimated Expenditure. The total Expenditure is £87,424,000, showing a saving, as compared with the Budget Estimate, of £423,000.

I trust that these figures will not be unsatisfactory to the Committee. I have several remarks to make with regard to them. I do not propose to go into detail with respect to the savings which we have secured. I may state, with regard to the Consolidated Fund Services, that there has been a saving of about £100,000 in the interest of the Unfunded Debt, which saving, of course, has gone to diminish the Funded Debt, being employed as so much more money to pay off that Debt. This has been partly due to the low rate of interest on Treasury and Exchequer Bills, the average of which has been £2 5*s.* 11*d.*; but there has also been a saving of £15,000 to which I should like to allude. It is a saving which I have secured by watching more closely the balances at the Bank of England than has hitherto been done. I have not thought it necessary always to renew Treasury Bills on the day when they expired; but I have looked at the needs of the Treasury for the next week or month, and in that way I have kept down the balance at the Bank of England, and the result has been that I have been able to save £15,000, an amount which again goes to the credit of the Sinking Fund. In the next place, I wish to call attention to the fact that there have been no Supplemental Estimates this year for the Army and Navy; and in no year since 1870 have there not been Supplemental Estimates or Votes of Credit for the Navy or the Army, or generally for both. I trust that in view of the constant charges, which are levelled at the great spending Departments, of extravagance, and sometimes of maladministration, I may point to the fact that my two right hon. Friends at the head of those two Departments have this year, for the first time for many years, been able to keep down the expenditure to that which Parliament intended should be spent, and to exercise such a control that there have been none of those Supplementary Estimates which destroy the confidence of Parliament in the preparation of Estimates, and which also destroy the chances of the Chancellor of the Exchequer submitting a successful Budget. Again, I have to say there have been no Supplemental Estimates for the Revenue Departments. This has not happened for the last 20 years. And, again, the Supplemental Estimates for the Civil Services have been lower than in any other year for 20 years, except last year. They have been only £208,000; last year they were £165,000. Of course, I do not include in Supplemental Estimates the grant in aid of roads. I am speaking of Supplemental Estimates in the ordinary sense, which are in excess of the sums voted by Parliament. To sum up, we have spent £423,000 less than the original Estimates, and £612,000 less than our original and Supplementary Estimates taken together.

I now pass to the consideration of the Revenue, and again I am able to submit a fairly satisfactory account to the Committee. I presume that the Committee will wish to have each separate head of Revenue. The revenue from Customs—and here again I may remind the Committee that the revenue for one week is only an estimate—the revenue from Customs is £19,630,000, or £30,000 more than the Estimate; but it is considerably less than the receipts of last year, owing to the reduction of the Tobacco Duty. The receipts from Excise are £25,597,000, or an excess of £305,000 over the Estimate. The Stamps amount to £12,940,000, showing an increase, on which I shall presently dilate, of £1,182,000. The Land Tax amounts to £1,050,000, showing a deficiency of £15,000. The House Duty amounts to £1,890,000, showing a deficiency of £30,000; and the Income Tax is £14,340,000, or exactly the sum which it was estimated to produce. That amount may be varied slightly in the coming week; but if there is any change it will be that it will realize somewhat more than the Estimate. The total produce of taxes is thus £75,447,000, showing an excess over our Estimates of £1,472,000. Post Office receipts are £8,650,000, showing an increase of £50,000; Telegraph Service, £1,950,000, which is the exact estimate; Crown Lands are £390,000, or an excess of £20,000; Interest on advances for local works and purchase money of Suez Canal is £242,000, an excess of £2,000; Miscellaneous revenue is £2,910,000, showing a decrease, as compared with the Estimate, of £90,000. The total Non-Tax Revenue is £14,142,000, and is £18,000 less than the Estimate. The total Revenue is £89,589,000, being £1,454,000 more than the estimated Budget receipts.

The Committee will wish to have some little information with regard to some of the items of increase. The total Estimate of Customs was £19,600,000, and the receipts I put down at £19,630,000. This is a remarkably close estimate, looking at the enormous sum involved. And, pointing to that, I must allude to the great loss which the State has sustained in the death of Mr. Seldon, who was a most accomplished statistician, an authority on Customs, and most conversant with these matters, and who has guided, and well guided, many Chancellors of the Exchequer in succession. I am glad to recognize, and I think it right that Parliament and the country should recognize, the services of our Civil servants in the great Departments who are performing their work in comparative obscurity. It is a subject on which I always feel strongly, and it is for that reason that I call attention to the matter, and wish to pay a tribute to the memory of one who served us well. It is right that the little-noticed work of the Civil Service should not be forgotten or undervalued. Four men of equal ability leave the University at one time. One man becomes a Bishop, another a Judge, another a Member of Parliament, and perhaps a Minister, and the fourth becomes, in the capacity of a permanent Civil servant, the mainstay, perhaps the head, of a Department of the State. He enjoys less fame and less remuneration than any of the others. That is all the more reason why, where there is merit and ability on the part of a Civil servant similar to that which is displayed in other careers in life, that merit and ability should be gratefully recognized by his countrymen.

Now, I will say a very few words with regard to the smaller differences in the Customs revenue. Coffee and its two satellites, chicory and cocoa, never show any remarkable eccentricities. They seldom increase the Revenue beyond the Estimate. They are dull items, and there is no elasticity in them whatever. Tea is fairly, though not remarkably, progressive. In 1886-7 the receipts from tea were £4,515,000, and in 1887-8 they were £4,618,000, or an increase of £103,000. This is somewhat more than in proportion to the increase in the population; but I cannot say that it is a revenue which shows much elasticity. With regard to tobacco, where a reduction in the duty took place last year, the estimated reduction of receipts was £515,000; but it has actually been £595,000, an excess over our estimated loss of £80,000. That loss has not been due so much to any miscalculation of the Customs or Inland Revenue, as to the fact that very considerable delay took place in the voting of the Budget last year; and, consequently, the Watering Clauses, which prevent an excess of water being put into tobacco, did not come into operation till a later period of the year than we reckoned for. When they did come into operation, they considerably increased the consumption of tobacco—that is to say, the individual smoker smoked more tobacco and less water in every pipe he consumed. Since the 1st of August there is a gratifying increase in the amount of unmanufactured tobacco cleared of 26,900,000 lbs. weight as against 25,900,000 lbs. in the corresponding period of the previous year, being an increase of 1,000,000 lbs. Our calculations, therefore, are beginning to be justified. The House will remember that I defended the reduction of the Tobacco Duty on the ground that extra duty had checked consumption. Just before the duty was raised in 1877 the consumption was 1·49 lbs. per head per annum. In 1882 it had fallen to 1·12 lbs. per head, and it continued at about that point till last year. But in the last five months of last year, when the Watering Clauses and the reduction of duty came together into operation, the consumption went back to where it stood before the duty was raised, and it stands now at 1·49 lbs. per head per annum.

The last heads of Customs and Revenue to which I need refer are spirits and wine. I must take these in connection with home-made spirits and beer, and treat them under the general head of drink revenue. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) called special attention to the falling-off in the revenue under this head some time ago. In 1876-7 the revenue was £30,909,000; in the year 1887-8, which we have just concluded, it was £27,013,000, showing a fall of no less than £3,866,000. I do not know whether it will be satisfactory to the Committee—it depends whether they look at the question as moralists or as financiers—to know that that decline in the revenue from drink has been arrested during the last year. For the first time for many years, there has not been a decline in the revenue from drink—["The Jubilee!"] There has been an increase—a very considerable increase—in the amount derived from beer; and I am credibly informed, and I think that an hon. Member behind me has anticipated the explanation, that the great loyal demonstration of last year, and the festivities connected with it, did lead to an increased consumption of beer. In the summer months of last year the revenue from beer showed a very great elasticity, and it amounted for the whole year to £8,710,000, the largest sum ever realized under this head. Throughout the year foreign spirits were stationary. In home spirits the consumption increased, as compared with the Estimate, by £170,000. Wine only fell off £28,000, whereas we had calculated upon a loss of £100,000. On the whole, there is an increase of £300,000 over the Estimate on account of the revenue from drink.

This is, perhaps, a proper point in my Statement to remind the Committee that consumable articles generally no longer yield to the Revenue what they did. In 1876-7 taxes on consumable articles yielded £1 6*s.* 1*d.* per head; whereas in 1887-8 they yielded only £1 2*s.* 3*d.* per head. Thus that portion of the Revenue to which the great consuming classes chiefly contribute is a halting and an inelastic Revenue. But in contrast to the consumable articles stands the next great item of Revenue—namely, Stamps. I call the special attention of the Committee to this subject. Stamps have produced in the present year under their two great heads of Death Duties and general stamps—£8,160,000 from Death Duties, and £4,780,000 under the head of general stamps; being a total of £12,940,000, or £1,160,000 more than last year. Now, this large item of Revenue is contributed mainly by the well-to-do classes; and I must say that the whole of the area which is covered by the Stamp Duties constitutes a very promising field for the fiscal reaper. We have had a very good crop from it this last year; and I am not sure that the crop has reached its maximum, and that further revenue may not be derived from that source.

I cannot pass away from this subject without saying one word about the yield of the Probate Duty, which has shown such extraordinary results this year. I may mention that it began to produce those extraordinary results just at the date when, in a premature speech, I declared that the Death Duties yielded a most steady and average revenue. Since then the Probate Duty has heaped coals of fire on my head by pouring unwontedly large sums into the Exchequer. There have fallen in two of the largest estates that have ever had to submit to the tax, both of them amounting to upwards of £3,000,000; and £3,000,000 means a cheque for £90,000. But that will not exhaust the revenue from these estates, because there are Legacy Duties to follow, and which will be paid in the ensuing year. There was also a third estate of £1,800,000. While there have been these three windfalls—and I wish the Committee to consider them as windfalls—while we have had these three windfalls in the present year, there have been only three estates of £3,000,000 before during the last 20 years. Then, again, we have had a larger number of estates than usual which pay Legacy Duty at the rate of 10 per cent. To sum up, the Probate and Legacy Duties give £7,300,000; the Succession Duty gives only £820,000, and of that £150,000 is contributed by settled personalty. This shows how small a part is played by Succession Duty in the finances of the country. Taking Stamps as a whole, while, of course, it cannot be inferred that this great increase in the revenue is necessarily a proof of growing prosperity, as it includes that which is raised from the Death Duties, yet there has been also a great increase in the revenue from business stamps, properly speaking. There is an increase of £440,000 in general stamps, and that, I think, may be fairly taken as a confirmation of the revival of the trade of which the first symptoms have begun to appear. There has been a distinct increase in business, which is revealed to us in part by the increase in this portion of the Stamp Duties.

Of the Income Tax I cannot speak with any degree of satisfaction. The yield of the tax per penny was £2,000,000 in 1884-5; £1,980,000 in the year following; £1,960,000 in 1886-7; and it is £1,955,000 in 1887-8. Thus, since 1884-5, there has been a small decrease from year to year in the yield of the penny, instead of an increase, as might have been hoped. Hon. Members will remember that the Income Tax is affected not only by the business of the year, but by that of preceding years, because the average of three years is taken in calculating business profits, and we have been passing through a cycle of unsatisfactory years. With reviving trade we may look for some little improvement; but when I come to estimate the Revenue for next year it will be impossible to hope for any large increase of revenue from this source.

I will now sum up the results for the present year. The actual Revenue is £89,589,000; the Estimate was £88,135,000; so that the excess over the Estimate is £1,454,000. The saving on Expenditure was £422,000; the surplus for which I estimated was £289,000; and I am, therefore, able to lay before the Committee a realized surplus for the year 1887-8 of £2,165,000, the largest since 1873-4.

May I pause for a moment to examine the effect of these satisfactory results upon our balances? I began the year with a balance of £5,950,000, and I leave off with a balance of £7,438,000—an increase of £1,488,000. It is always necessary, at this time of the year, to have a large balance in hand, looking to the dividends payable in April; and I have a special reason, which the Committee can readily understand, for desiring to have a very handsome balance on March the 31st this year, in order that I may be comfortably prepared to hand over their sovereigns to any holders of the New Threes who may prefer to ask for £100 in money rather than to take new Stock, which now stands at £100¾. It is well to have a strong balance to be able to meet such demands as may be made upon us.

I will now show the effect of the year's finance upon the Debt; but before doing so I must pause for a moment here to revert to a somewhat technical and dry subject—namely, the Local Loans Debt and the Local Loans Fund which I established last year. According to the system which I then ventured to inaugurate, a special account was to be kept of what may be called the Reproductive Debt of the country. It is money lent out to Local Authorities, against which the country receives as income the interest which is paid by the Local Authorities. There will now be presented to Parliament, for the first time, a clear account showing how much is loaned, what is outstanding, what each loan costs us, what we shall receive in return, and what additional sums we have lent in the course of the year. There will be a capital account and a revenue account. The capital account will show that the National Debt Commissioners have lent during this year £3,206,000, and that they have received in repayment £1,906,000, so that there is a balance of £1,300,000 of new advances. According to the system which we inaugurated, there will be issued new Local Loan Stock against this sum. Hon. Members will see that they will now be able to watch from year to year how much we lend to Local Authorities and how much we receive from them. We have not yet been able to make up our final statement, because we have felt it our duty to see what bad debts have been incurred in the course of the present year. This is a contingency we ought always to remember, and which ought always to be brought home to Parliament. I cannot help thinking that we have in the past too much encouraged the idea that if there is a margin between the rate of interest at which we lend and the rate of interest we receive, the transactions are necessarily profitable. I now come to the Revenue account. We have received as interest on loans £1,258,000; we have paid as interest on Local Loans Stock and on Short Loans £1,033,000; and that shows a surplus of £225,000, which is to be charged with that restitution annuity of £130,000 which was established by the Local Loans Bill—an annuity which is to restore the arrears which were lost before these transactions began. In former years, the Committee will remember, £4,000,000 had been lost by bad debts, and before we can say that this banking business, as we may call it, is remunerative, we must restore, even if it be by degrees, the £4,000,000 we have lost. The figures leave a surplus of £95,000, but from that the expense of the lending departments ought to be deducted; and that leaves a balance of about £50,000, for what may be practically regarded as a Sinking Fund, against which we have to set off some bad debts incurred in the year. I am not aware of any large amounts, but there are one or two small amounts, and a Vote will have to be taken to wipe them out. In that way it will be brought home to the House where the money is lost, how it is lost, and through what means it is lost.

At present it will be more interesting to show what we have been doing with the National Debt. Including the increase in our balances of £1,488,000, which is equivalent to a reduction of Debt, we have diminished our liabilities during the year by no less a sum than £7,601,000. But it is more to the point, perhaps, in judging of a particular year, to know how much money belonging to the year 1887-8, the current year, has been, or will be, appropriated to the reduction of the Debt. Hon. Members will remember the complaints that were made against me last year, when I introduced my Budget, that I had been content with a smaller sum than I ought to have taken for reducing the National Debt, and it was said that the result in paying off the Debt would consequently be unsatisfactory. At all events, I either have paid off or shall pay off, with moneys actually belonging to this year, £7,293,000—the largest sum that has ever been paid off out of the moneys of a single year since 1872-3.

What, then, are the main features of the past year? For the first time since 1870, there have been no Supplementary

Estimates or Votes of Credit either for Army or Navy. For the first time since 1869 there have been no Supplementary Estimates for the Revenue Departments. There have been smaller Supplementary Estimates for Civil Services than for 20 years past, excepting last year. We have a larger surplus, a larger balance at the end of the year, and we have paid off more Debt than in any year since 1872-3. I trust the Committee will consider that this is not an unsatisfactory balance sheet to submit to the country. I know how small a portion of the savings effected is due to the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. The greater portion of the credit must be given to the Departments that have so well used the money entrusted to them by Parliament. I am also thankful—and as Chancellor of the Exchequer I say this—not as a Member of the Cabinet—I am especially grateful to the Foreign Minister that we have been able to keep out of those petty wars which break in so unexpectedly sometimes upon the assets of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which upset his best calculations and destroy his most sanguine hopes.

I now pass to the coming year, and I have to deal, in the first place, with the Estimates of Expenditure. These are mostly known to the Committee; but perhaps it may be for the convenience of hon. Members that I should read them out in order to bring them within one focus.

Upon the Consolidated Fund Charges we estimate the expenditure at £27,861,000. The Army, £16,700,000; Ordnance Factories, £30,000; the Navy, £13,083,000; Civil Services, £18,145,000; Customs and Inland Revenue, £2,746,000; Post Office, £5,667,000; Telegraph Service, £2,037,000; Packet Service, £641,000—total, £59,049,000. The total Expenditure, therefore, is estimated—if you add these figures together—at £86,910,000, or a diminution of £514,000 as compared with the actual Expenditure of the present year. I do not think I need comment on any of the increases or decreases in the Services, as those will be discussed in connection with the various Estimates when they are proposed to the House, and I have so much work before me that I do not think it is worth while to venture into the subject. I will only point out that the increase in the Revenue Departments, £38,000, is due entirely to the fact that the triennial valuation that has to be made increases the cost of the Inland Revenue Department. For Post Office and Telegraphs there is an increase of £361,000, which is largely due to sites for new buildings necessitated by the extension of the Parcel Post system. I regret to say that in our Estimates of Revenue we have not been able to increase the Post Office revenue by the same amount as the expenditure. That is not satisfactory to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I commend it to the attention of those hon. Members who think that the Post Office is a Department which is always giving a growing surplus, and on which constant new demands, therefore, may safely be made.

Now, Mr. Courtney, having dealt with the Expenditure, and before I pass to the Revenue of the coming year, I wish to refer to two other matters which more or less touch Expenditure. The one is the Imperial Defence Bill—the proposals made by my right hon. Friends the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War in connection with the defences of the Kingdom and the Colonies. They have already stated the main outlines of their scheme, and they have informed the House that the money required for it would be raised, as the money for the localization of the Forces was raised, by temporary loans. They did not, however, state any details. In the case of the Navy, the money will be borrowed and repaid by an annuity running for 10 years, charged against the Navy Estimates every year. There will be no material charge until the year 1889. The Committee may remember that the ships are to be at the absolute disposal of the Admiralty at the end of the 10 years. By the end of the 10 years this annuity will cease, and the whole amount will be paid off. There will thus be an annuity on the Navy Estimates for 10 years; but against that there will be received £35,000 from the Colonies in respect of the ships, and the sum of £91,000 annually to equip and maintain these ships. Thus there will be a set-off to the Navy Estimates in respect of these ships. The clause will be as follows:—

"The Treasury shall from time to time issue out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or the growing produce thereof, such sums, not exceeding in the whole the sum of eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, as may be required by the Admiralty for the purpose of building, arming, and completing for sea the vessels mentioned in articles six and seven of the Australasian Agreement.

"The sums so issued shall be treated as an advance, and shall be repaid to the Consolidated Fund out of the moneys annually provided by Parliament for naval services by an annuity of such amount as will repay the same, with interest at three per cent per annum, within twelve years from the end of the financial year in which the first of the said sums was issued.

"All sums received from the Governments of the Australasian Colonies in pursuance of the Australasian Agreement in respect of the annual sum either of thirty-five thousand pounds or of ninety-one thousand pounds mentioned in article seven of the agreement, shall be applied, under the directions of the Treasury, as an appropriation in aid of naval expenditure."

Thus it will be seen that no permanent addition, but only a slight temporary addition, will be made to our expenditure by these proposals, and that even this slight addition will have something to counterbalance it. I may here say that it is extremely important to everybody to embody this arrangement in an Act, because the Colonial Parliaments have passed Acts to carry out their part of the arrangement; and it seems right that the Imperial Parliament should not leave this money to be voted year by year, but that once for all the expenditure should be sanctioned for carrying out our part of the bargain, which we believe is satisfactory from a pecuniary point of view, and also very decidedly from the Imperial point of view, as establishing the principle that the Colonies should assist very materially in the general naval defence of the Empire. In the case of the Army requirements, the interest on the money borrowed will be provided for in the Army Estimates; but means have to be provided for paying off the capital. Now, I lay down this doctrine, which will be, I am sure, endorsed by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite and by the House generally, that this money should be borrowed for a term which is shorter than the probable duration of the works which are to be executed by means of this expenditure. It ought to be borrowed and paid off within a reasonably short time.

Now, I will submit to the House how I propose to do it. There is one national asset which has never yet been brought into account at its real value, and I do not believe there are 20 Gentlemen in this House, apart from those who had something to do with the transaction at the time, who are aware of the real value of that asset. I am referring to the asset which we possess in the 176,000 shares we hold in the Suez Canal. Now, the position as to those shares, at present, is as follows:—£4,000,000 was raised to pay for these shares; but, inasmuch as we were to draw no dividends in respect of them till 1894, we receive an annual payment up to 1894 from Egypt of £200,000, or 5 per cent, on the £4,000,000, 3½ per cent of which goes to pay the interest, while 1½ is treated as a Sinking Fund. The £4,000,000 has by this time been reduced to £3,200,000. The shares, on the other hand, which are £20 shares, and which, when they were bought, were worth about £27, yielding a dividend of 5 per cent on their par value, are now worth £84 each, and yield about 15 per cent on their par value. We shall come into a revenue of £570,000 per annum on these shares from 1894, unless there should be any fall in the revenue of the Canal, a contingency which we do not anticipate. At all events, we anticipate that instead of receiving £200,000 a-year, as at present, we shall, after 1894, be in receipt of a revenue of £570,000 a-year. I do not think I stated just now that the actuarial value of the shares at the present moment is £10,500,000—a comfortable nest-egg, I think I may say, and some set-off against the expenditure which has been incurred in connection with Egypt. Now, let the Committee realize how we stand at the present moment. We have this debt, £3,200,000, and we are receiving towards the liquidation of it £200,000 a-year. What I wish to submit to the Committee is this—that we should destroy and put an end to the present artificial system, to this debt on which we are paying 3½ per cent—that we should pay that off, except as much as will be paid off before 1894 by the £200,000 a-year, so that we shall have, when 1894 arrives, this whole asset of the Suez Canal shares clear of all liability whatever, and giving us a revenue of £570,000 a-year. I propose to utilize that revenue for the purpose of discharging the new debt of £2,300,000 which is required for the fortification of the ports and coaling stations. Its amount will be £2,300,000, and it will be seen that in four years or four and a-half years after 1894 the Exchequer Bills or Bonds raised to provide that sum will be paid off out of this revenue, which is at present totally unpledged, and we shall be able to raise this loan, and wipe it out entirely, without placing any burden whatever upon the taxpayers. We shall simply make use of the dividends of the Suez Canal shares for four and a-half years after we begin to receive them to pay off a loan incurred for the defence of the Empire. I trust these proposals will, when examined—and, of course, they must be carefully examined—commend themselves to the Committee; but I think, at all events, I carry out in these proposals my promise that the loan should be paid off very quickly and on very short terms, for the first moneys issued would begin to be paid off in 1894-5, six years hence, and all would be paid off within 10 years, and possibly within even a shorter time.

There is another expense which hon. Members may think might encumber the Revenue of the coming year—namely, the expense connected with the Conversion Scheme which I have submitted to the House. Now, I distinguish for a moment between the expenses proper—I mean the agency commission, bank charges, and matters of that kind—and the 5*s.* bonus which is to be given to holders of Consols and Reduced who accept our terms. I propose to charge these first-mentioned expenses against the first economies on interest which we shall receive, and which will begin on the 1st of April in the year after this. With regard to the bonus, had the bonus been larger, it would, of course, have been treated as an addition to the capital of the Funded Debt; but being so small in amount, at the outside £980,000, it will be paid in cash, and therefore any addition to the Funded Debt will be avoided. From whatever source, however, the money may be taken, and whatever liability the bonus may involve, very nearly an equal sum has already been secured as a set-off by a further operation preparatory to and connected with the Conversion Scheme—that is to say, there is what again I will call a nest-egg which has not been taken into account, and which may amount to nearly £1,000,000; that is the premium or additional value on the Local Loan Stock, whether realized or not realized, at this moment. There has already been netted in respect of the issue of Local Loan Stock the sum of £150,000. There is still £18,000,000 of the Stock in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners, on which, if you put the premium at 4 per cent, which is a very moderate estimate as compared with the price of Consols, you get £720,000, or, in all, £870,000. However that profit may be treated, I wish to show that by the issue of this Local Loans Stock, which stands at a premium, you have got an asset of about equal value as a set-off against the 5*s.* bonus which may be granted to the holders of Consols and Reduced. No addition to our liabilities will have been made. If the whole profit arising from the issue of Local Loans Stock were left in the hands of the Saving Banks Trustees, their position would be so strengthened that it might no longer be necessary to retain the annuity of £83,000 to make up the deficiency on the Savings Banks. Accordingly, we should have so much more for the reduction of our general expenditure. I will not elaborate the point; but I wish to show the Committee that, through the operation of the issue of Stock at a premium, you will have an asset of about equal amount to set against the liability in respect of the 5*s.* per cent bonus. [Mr. CHILDERS: Hear, hear!] If my right hon. Friend does not follow me, I am sure there is no one in the House who will be able to do so. I am afraid I am wearying the patience of the Committee by the slow rate at which I am getting on with my story; but I trust that I shall be able now to travel somewhat faster over the ground.

Now, having shown the total Expenditure to the Committee, I come to the interesting point of the estimated Revenue of the coming year. I will give the totals first, without going into details. I estimate the Customs at £19,800,000, or £170,000 more than the receipts of the current year; Excise at £25,560,000, less by £37,000 than the receipts of the present year; Stamps at £12,740,000, or £200,000 less; Land Tax, £1,046,000, less by £4,000; House Duty, £1,890,000, the same as the present year; Income Tax, £13,820,000, or £520,000 less, owing, of course, to the fact that the arrears will be taken at 7*d.* instead of 8*d.* That gives a total produce of taxes of £74,856,000, showing a decrease of £591,000 as compared with the current year. The Post Office revenue I plac at £8,800,000, or £150,000 more than this year; Telegraph Service, £2,000,000, or an increase of £50,000; Crown Lands, £390,000, the same as this year; Interest on the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, £241,000, which is about £1,000 less than this year; Miscellaneous, £3,000,000, an increase of £90,000; the total produce of the Non-Tax Revenue thus being £14,431,000, or an increase of £289,000. The total Revenue is, therefore, £89,287,000, or £302,000 less than in the current year. I do not think that the Committee will be surprised that the total estimated Revenue is placed at a lower figure than in the actual year, because, though there is some improvement in trade, it has certainly not yet developed to such an extent that a prudent Chancellor of the Exchequer would wish to swell his Estimates on the faith of it. The only items of substantial increase in the produce of taxes are under the head of Customs—namely, in respect of tobacco and of tea. I estimate £130,000 more for tobacco and £82,000 more for tea. I rely on it that the consumption of tobacco will be stimulated by the fact that the Watering Clauses will come into full effect in the ensuing year; and in tea I allow for the ordinary increase which has been justified by previous years. On the other items, except spirits, of which I have not yet spoken, there is no increase or decrease. With respect to the drink revenue, though there has been no decrease in the year just about to end, I am not prepared to say that the downward movement has been permanently arrested. I estimate £30,000 less for home-made spirits, and £30,000 less for foreign spirits. Beer I put at the same figure as last year. The past year was Leap Year, which gave an additional day in which to consume beer, and it was also, as I have said, the Jubilee year. Against that we have the ordinary increase of population, and I think it is a safe estimate to take beer at the same figure as before; but I do not think I should be justified in increasing the estimate. With regard to Stamps, I take off £320,000 from the Death Duties, in view of the abnormal produce of the Probate Duty in the present year. But, on the other hand, I allow for an increase of £120,000 in general stamps, which, it seems to me, is a fair and moderate increase to take—less, I think, than the normal increase; and the general effect is that under the head of stamps generally I allow for a net decrease of £200,000. Licences, Land Tax, and House Duty are practically unchanged. I need not say more in regard to the Income Tax than I have already explained to the Committee. The diminution will be £520,000; but that is due to the fact that the arrears last year were taken at 8*d.*, while this year they will be taken at 7*d.* The new valuation on Schedule A, which is going to take place this year, will somewhat increase the revenue from Income Tax as regards house property; but I must set that off against the probability that there will be a reduction with regard to landed property, and so I allow for a total diminution of £520,000.

To sum up the Revenue for the coming year, there is an estimated improvement on Customs of £170,000, against a loss on receipts from other taxes of £761,000; therefore the tax estimate is worse by £591,000. On the other side, there is an expected improvement in non-tax receipts of £289,000. The total receipts in 1887-8 were £89,589,000; I estimate for 1888-9, £89,287,000, showing a decrease of £302,000. On the other hand, if hon. Members will carry their minds back, there is also a decrease in Expenditure of £514,000. I am now able, therefore, to come to my estimated balance for the coming year on the existing basis of taxation. I do not think I need read the figures over again. The total taxes are £74,856,000; the total Non-Tax Revenue is £14,431,000, making together £89,287,000. The total Expenditure is £86,910,000, showing a surplus on the existing basis of taxation of £2,377,000.

And now, Mr. Courtney, I come to a part of my Statement which may be of more interest to hon. Members than the accounts of last year, or even of the coming year on the existing basis of taxation, for they will be more interested to know what the result of the National Balance Sheet will be on the future basis of taxation in connection with the changes which we propose to introduce. And here, Mr. Courtney, I am placed in a somewhat unpleasant position—

namely, that, having a satisfactory balance of £2,377,000 to dispose of, I see havoc and devastation wrought upon that balance by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). There are many schemes of relief from taxation which I would most gladly have undertaken; but the claims of my right hon. Friend's clients, the ratepayers, endorsed as they have been by successive Parliaments for many years past, it has been impossible to ignore; and, consequently, I have now for a short time to abandon my position as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to place before the Committee some information with regard to the Local Budget, or rather—I say it to my own distress, and I fear to the distress of those who have to listen to me—to two Local Budgets, because we have to make both a provisional arrangement for the coming financial year, and a permanent arrangement which will take effect when the Local Authorities have come into power after their election on the 1st of April, 1889. I may have to travel over some ground which has already been travelled over by my right hon. Friend; but, perhaps, it will be agreeable to the Committee to hear how we shall stand as regards local finances in somewhat more detail.

Now, first as to the permanent plan, which is to come into operation on the 1st of April, 1889, after the new authorities are in power. Under it we begin our re-adjustment of Imperial and Local Taxation by taking away from the localities grants in aid amounting to £2,600,000. We shall remove this charge entirely from the Imperial Budget. I am sure most of the Committee and most of my right hon. Friends opposite will agree that it is bad finance to have the same expenditure appearing in two accounts. This £2,600,000—I am speaking, of course, in round numbers — appears in the first instance as Imperial expenditure; and, secondly, it appears again in its proper place as local expenditure, and by adding up both you get a higher figure than the real expenditure, because of this double entry. We propose in future to separate the two entirely. As I was saying, we withdraw from Local Authorities grants amounting to £2,600,000. But, on the other hand, we give up to the County Authorities existing licences bringing in £3,000,000, and there will be some new licences amounting, in round numbers, to £800,000; or, in all, £3,800,000. The existing licences which we propose to give up are of two kinds. One portion, amounting to £1,400,000, of which publicans' licences form the bulk, will be collected by the County Authorities, and may be increased to a certain limited extent at the discretion of those authorities. The other portion, amounting to about £1,600,000, of which the main items are the dog, gun, and game licences, and the Carriage Tax, will still be collected by the Inland Revenue, and the County Authorities will have no power to increase them, because they are licences which must continue the same over the whole of the United Kingdom. It would not do, for instance, to have one licence tax raised in Norfolk, and another at a different rate raised in Kent, considering how people move to and fro in this country. It would not be fair or practicable to have these licences raised by the counties, and varying in different counties. Consequently, these taxes, although local in their character, will be raised by Imperial agency; but in both cases the counties will receive the proceeds of the licence duties. But with regard to this point I may say there is a clause in the Bill, which hon. Members will see to-morrow, which will clear up any doubts in regard to the manner in which these licences will be localized.

I now come to what may be a more interesting point, and that is the promise of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board that a substantial sum should be contributed from personal property to the relief of local taxation. It has been the dream of reformers of local taxation to make personalty contribute to local expenditure. I understand that many Chancellors of the Exchequer have tried to see whether they could carry out a system of local Income Tax; but I understand that all have broken down. I ought, perhaps, to ask a preliminary question—but I cannot dwell upon the point—to what extent the ratepayers are entitled to the relief which is to be given them? My right hon. Friend did not discuss that subject, and it is so large a one that I think the Committee will excuse me if I do not now go into it. But I must enter a protest against the suggestion which has been put forward in some quarters that this relief of local taxation is simply to be a gift to the squirearchy. On the contrary, a very large portion of this relief will go to the poorest ratepayers in some of the poorest towns of the Kingdom. During the whole of the conflict which has raged round this question it has always been maintained that the towns have a ratepayer's grievance as well as the country. There is also this distinction—and it is one for which I have myself strenuously contended—that while a large portion of rates are hereditary burdens, subject to which property has been bought and sold, and which, therefore, should come distinctly from the pockets of the landlord, on the other hand, there has of late years been an enormous increase in the rates which was not foreseen by Parliament, and which, as it results not from the legislation of the past, but of the present, is distinctly not a hereditary burden. It has been imposed by recent Parliaments, and imposed on land and houses alone, to the advantage of personalty, not on any ground of principle, but simply because Parliament has not been able to devise means of making the latter kind of property contribute in any substantial degree, except by the obnoxious system of grants in aid, to local taxation. The situation has thus greatly changed of recent years. Hon. Members will remember that between 1868 and this year rates have risen from between £16,000,000 and £17,000,000 to £26,000,000 or more; and I do not believe that any relief which Parliament would be ready to give, and certainly no relief we shall propose, would be equal to those additional charges which have been placed during the last 25 years upon rateable property. I make this protest against the suggestion that our proposal is one for the relief of hereditary burdens which ought to be borne by the landowner, and here I must make another remark as to that portion of rateable property which consists of land. Land has depreciated enormously in value since former comparisons were made with regard to the contributions of real and personal property. Those comparisons were made when rates were lower and land more valuable, and therefore are not applicable to the situation which exists now. I trust that the relief which we are giving, and which will go in part to the towns and in part to the counties, will not be represented as given merely to one interest and one class of property. What we believe we have done in the proposal we have submitted to Parliament is to offer relief to all ratepayers, bearing in mind that Parliament has declared that the time has come when other property should be brought in to assist in bearing the burden that now rests exclusively on land and houses.

Well, then, how is this to be done? How is this contribution from personal property, of which my right hon. Friend spoke, to be effected? I have said that a local Income Tax seemed to be an impossible idea. The next idea, and one which has been a very favourite one, is that you might raise 1*d.*, or any other sum, by the Imperial Income Tax, and then allocate it for local purposes. But I will state what I consider to be a fatal objection to that plan. Income Tax is largely paid in respect of land and houses, the very property upon which those rates chiefly fall which we are anxious to relieve, so that by means of an Income Tax you would be simply taking away with one hand what you were granting with the other. Again, there is another objection to the arrangement by means of Income Tax, and that is that it is largely charged upon earnings, and that it weighs very heavily upon the struggling middle class, upon whom the rates also fall very heavily. I have a strong opinion that Income Tax falls very severely upon professional men and upon the lower middle class. They, perhaps, feel the burden of taxation as severely as any class of the community; hence the Government are not prepared to propose that relief should be provided out of the Income Tax. What we have rather to look to is to get at realized personalty—personal property which is yielding income, and not personal earnings. Now, there is one tax which falls exclusively on realized personalty, and that is the Probate Duty, and we propose to give up permanently to the Local Authorities one-half of the Probate Duty. That is the manner in which we propose to assist local taxation—through the means of a tax which is distinctly seen to be derived from realized property. I hope that the Committee will understand that if we give half of the Probate Duty to the Local Authorities, we do not intend to take the whole of that half for England alone. Scotland and Ireland must be considered too. We take the share of England, for reasons I will presently explain, at 80 per cent, or four-fifths, of the Probate Duty. The total for the year 1888-9 is estimated at £4,260,000. Half of that is £2,130,000, and the share of England, or 80 per cent, is £1,704,000. And here I want to point out that an additional advantage of giving a portion of the Probate Duty in relief of local taxation is that this duty is not a stationary but a rising and improving duty. It is but a very few years ago that the duty only amounted to £3,700,000, while last year it was about £4,500,000. Therefore, if local finance shares with Imperial finance in the Probate Duty, there will be this constant hope for the ratepayer—that as personal property increases, the contribution which he will receive will increase in proportion, and he will have a growing participation in the realized wealth of the country.

I can now sum up to the Committee the permanent arrangement which will come into force in April, 1889. It will be this. The licences, both transferred and new, which will be at the disposal of the Local Authorities, will bring in £3,800,000; half of the Probate Duty, £1,700,000—total, £5,500,000; but from this we must take the present grants, amounting to £2,600,000, which will leave a net gain in relief of local taxation of £2,900,000 for England and Wales. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) said £3,000,000. If there is any increase whatever in the course of the two years in the Probate Duty the relief will amount to £3,000,000, and the total at the disposal of the Local Authorities will be £5,600,000, for, as I have shown, mine is a minimum estimate.

At this point I must ask the Committee to follow me in a matter which takes me again away for a moment from the Local to the Imperial Budget. The Committee is aware that there has always been a double controversy going on —two parallel and simultaneous grievances with regard to the burdens borne by realty and personalty respectively. The friends of the ratepayer have always complained that personal property did not contribute anything towards local taxation. But, on the other hand, there has been a grievance on the part of the friends of the Imperial taxpayer. They have said that landed property did not contribute its fair share to Imperial taxation. Now, what is perfectly obvious is that the two questions must be treated together. Both complaints quite possibly may have been true. It may be true, and I believe it was true, that personal property did not contribute its fair share to local taxation—that it contributed scarcely anything. On the other hand, it is equally true that the Death Duties upon land are considerably smaller than those imposed upon personal property. Now, the Committee will see how the situation is varied by the proposal which I make. In future, the Probate Duty on personal property for Imperial purposes will be only 1½ per cent, instead of 3 per cent—but, of course, there will still be the Legacy Duty. The Succession Duty at the present moment for lineals is 1 per cent. Lineals are exempt from the Legacy Duty.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): On the life interest.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Lineals pay no Legacy Duty. The matter is extremely complicated; but I think I can satisfy my right hon. Friend. The lineals, in the case of the Succession Duty, pay 1 per cent.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: On the life interest only.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; there is that difference, I admit. But I am not proposing to deal with all the anomalies of the Death Duties. I cannot attempt that task, as a whole, in the present Session. What I was pointing out is this. Perhaps I can best explain it by going back to the proposal of my right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) in 1885. He suggested that the Succession Duty should be raised from 1 per cent to 3 per cent in the case of lineals, in order to put it on a level with the Probate Duty, which was 3 per cent, and which was all (lineals paying no Legacy Duty) that personal property paid when it passed to lineals. Hereafter the Probate Duty will stand at 1½ per cent. The amount of the duty remaining for Imperial purposes, when I transfer 1½ per cent to the Local Authorities, will be 1½ per cent. As far as Imperial finance is concerned, I cut away 1½ per cent from the Probate Duty. Therefore, the difference—of which so much is constantly made—between the Succession Duty and the Probate Duty (apart from the question of life interest) will be reduced from 3 per cent, as against 1 per cent, to 1½ per cent, as against 1 per cent; and in order that the grievance may be met, I propose that the Succession Duty shall be raised ½ per cent, after which the Succession Duty—that is to say, the Death Duty paid by land—will, in the case of lineals, be 1½ per cent, just as the Probate Duty, which is the only Death Duty paid by lineals in respect of personalty, will be 1½ per cent. I spoke of parallel grievances. What I propose is to remove one grievance, that of the local ratepayer, by handing him over a portion of the Imperial Death Duties. Half the Probate Duty is to be paid to the relief of local burdens. It disappears from Imperial taxation, and then, by a slight increase in the Succession Duty, you will have equal rates on the two kinds of property for Imperial purposes. I effect this, in the case of lineals, who pay no Legacy Duty, by adding ½ per cent to the Succession Duty, and in the case of collaterals, who do pay Legacy Duty, by adding 1½ per cent to the Succession Duty.

But while I take this step to equalize the amount of the contributions of real and personal property, it would not, I think, be fair to insist on a similar method of payment in both cases. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) called attention to one point in which those who pay Succession Duty are at a considerable advantage; but there are others in which they stand at an immense disadvantage. We cannot compare the weight of the duty raised on land with the weight of the duty resting on personal property which can be sold. If that difference ever existed, it exists in tenfold force at the present moment, when it is so difficult to sell land, and when the value of land is so depreciated. I cannot fancy any heavier burden than that now resting, for instance, on the Irish landlord, who cannot sell his estate, who cannot collect his rents, and who, nevertheless, is liable to Succession Duty. While, therefore, I suggest a slight alteration in the amount of the Succession Duty, I also propose to give a somewhat longer time—namely eight, instead of four years—for the payment of the duty. [An hon. MEMBER: He may sell a portion.] I think those who are acquainted with land will know that it is extremely difficult to sell a portion or corner of an estate in order to realize a certain sum. You cannot separate farm buildings from a farm; you may not be able to get a proper rotation of crops; and there are a hundred circumstances besides, which prevent a man from selling a portion of land in order to meet a special charge. To impose on an heir the necessity of selling part of his land in a hurry is to throw on him a heavy burden; and if, without sinning against any financial canon, we can prevent that, while slightly raising the duty, I think that is a proposal to which no strong objection can be made. The financial effect of the raising of the Succession Duty by ½ per cent on lineals, and by 1½ per cent on collaterals, in order to put it on the same footing as the Probate and Legacy Duty, when half the Probate Duty has been handed over, will not be considerable in the coming year. I put it at £50,000; but this, of course, is a source of income which will increase in subsequent years.

Now I must return to the Local Budget. The contributions at present coming to the Imperial Exchequer, and which are hereafter to go to the counties, amount to £5,500,000. The Committee will remember of what this sum consists. I now have to explain to the Committee the distribution both of the licences and of the contribution from the Probate Duty, which will go to the localities. The principle we adopt in the distribution of the portion which comes from the Probate Duty is that it shall be paid to each county according to the proportion which the indoor pauperism of that county bears to the indoor pauperism of the country as a whole. This distribution has been criticized as being unequal. It has been said that it would very much favour London, where the proportion of indoor pauperism is much greater than in any other part of the country. But I particularly ask hon. Members to bear in mind that this distribution must not be taken by itself, but in connection with the surrender of licences and the withdrawal of the Imperial grants. It will probably turn out that the withdrawal from London of the grant for police will more than neutralize any advantage London may get from the distribution of a particular portion of the funds to be given up for local purposes according to indoor pauperism. Every county, every Quarter Sessions borough, every rateable area will get some advantage under my right hon. Friend's (Mr. Ritchie's) Bill; but the distribution must be looked at as a whole, and cannot be judged simply by the allocation of one particular part of the resources to be surrendered. We may look upon the distribution of this half of the Probate Duty as a corrective of the inequality which may arise from the exchange of licences for grants in aid.

There is a proposal that you should give the new money in proportion as counties and boroughs have been in receipt of the old grants. It seems to me that nothing could be more unjust. If there were a great lunatic asylum, in a particular county, receiving a considerable Imperial grant, and if you were to say, "This county has been receiving so much, and practically, as there is more money to be distributed, you must pay in proportion to what it has received hitherto," you would be offending against every principle of justice. You must rather look to see where the shoe pinches most. Now, all grants, as I have explained, will disappear from the National Exchequer. The county will pay them instead of the Exchequer, and these grants will be a first charge on the Revenue given up to the county by the Exchequer. The Revenue so given up will, in the next place, meet the whole cost of the disturnpiked roads, and will pay the 4*d.* per head for every indoor pauper, and what remains over will go to general county purposes. For instance, where there are Quarter Sessions boroughs with their own police, and where the rest of the county has its own police, a certain portion of the new grant will go to the Quarter Sessions, and the remainder will go to the county. It will be distributed first to the widest areas, and will then descend to the narrower areas; so I believe that in the end the county will benefit, the Quarter Sessions boroughs will benefit, and the District Councils will benefit, and the ratepayer, wherever he is paying rates, will find that he has some relief. He will find that he has relief in his poor rate, county rates, general borough rate, and highway rate. I must beg hon. Members to bear all this relief in mind, because, if there are additional licence taxes to be raised, their defence will be in the great amount of the relief to be given in almost every quarter, and which will far outweigh, to the vast majority of ratepayers, the burden of these new licences.

I pass now from the permanent to the transitional arrangement which is rendered necessary by the circumstances of the present year. The County Authorities, to whom the licences are to be handed over, do not yet exist, and we think that to take steps in order to leave them in possession of a balance when they come into office would be a direct incentive to them to begin with extravagance. We propose, therefore, to give only so much this year as can be fairly distributed and spent by existing authorities. What we propose to pay this year, as explained by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie), is the 4*d.* per head for every indoor pauper, and a contribution towards the disturnpiked main roads, together with some corresponding relief to the Metropolis and the Quarter Sessions boroughs. For this we propose to give up at once one-third—that is, 1 per cent—of the Probate Duty, and to impose at once for local purposes only, so that they will in no way affect the Budget, the new licences which I have yet to explain. Roughly speaking, 1 per cent of the Probate Duty will almost pay for the indoor paupers, and the new licences will be the contribution in respect of the roads.

Now, the justice of this arrangement will become apparent when I come to the task which my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) has left to me—namely, to describe the new licence duties which are to be levied. Before I mention them I must again entreat the Committee to remember that this is not a question of Imperial taxation or of Imperial relief, or of Imperial contribution, but simply a question between one class of ratepayers and another. What is raised by these taxes will go to the relief of the ratepayers, and to the ratepayers alone. The cardinal point of our idea is to look at the fact that the roads are used gratis now, and that those who use a road contribute nothing to its support except by the highway rate, which falls equally on the whole body of the community. But is it not fair that those who use a road should contribute more than those who do not to the general maintenance of the road? If there are 50 ratepayers, and 40 of them use a road on foot, while 10 of them use it on horseback or on wheels, is it not fair that the 10 should pay something more as a contribution than the 40? Well, the Carriage Tax is one of those taxes which will be handed over to the Local Authorities, and I will speak of that in a moment. But quite apart from the Carriage Tax, which is a tax mainly on the more luxurious carriages—carriages used for pleasure—there is at present no tax on any other vehicles, however much they may destroy the roads, except omnibuses and a certain number of vehicles which ply for hire. But the heaviest description of vehicles—such as railway vans, coal contractors' carts, and vehicles of that character—[An hon. MEMBER: Brewers?] Yes; brewers' drays are a good instance. These vehicles use up the roads without paying one shilling more than anyone else for their maintenance. Well, we propose to put a duty of £1 a-year upon every vehicle exceeding 10 cwt. in weight, a very moderate limit to take. We propose that duty of £1, but with an exemption, which has always been made in favour of agricultural carts, carts used by farmers for the purposes of husbandry and not for haulage. Those vehicles which are propelled on roads by any other means than by horses will also be included. That is one of the new licences we propose, and I think hon. Members will acknowledge that the principle that all those who use the roads should pay for them, and should pay in some proportion to the wear and tear that they cause, is just. But I have not yet exhausted the subject. We propose, also, to put a very small Wheel Tax upon every vehicle.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): Not on carts?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes. We propose a duty of 2*s.* 6*d.* per wheel upon all carts over 2 cwt. [Colonel NOLAN: Oh!] A two-wheeled cart under this proposal will pay 5*s.* a-year towards the roads. I must say that I do not think, looking to the advantage of the other ratepayers, who have no carts, that that is an unfair charge. We have put it extremely low—5*s.* upon a two-wheeled and 10*s.* upon a four-wheeled cart. Gentlemen's carts and pleasure carriages will continue to pay higher duties—namely, the present Carriage Tax, with such modifications as I will presently indicate; but we do think it is fair that those who use the roads should in this slight degree contribute towards their repair. We expect to derive £300,000 from this tax.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): Will the Wheel Tax have to be paid for heavy carts in addition to the £1 duty?

MR. GOSCHEN: I am obliged to my right hon. Friend for the interruption. We think that those heavy carts use the roads to such an extent that they may fairly bear the Wheel Tax of 2*s.* 6*d.* a wheel, as well as the duty of £1.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): Will farm waggons have to pay?

MR. GOSCHEN: Those employed in agriculture on farms will be excluded. I hope that hon. Members will see that this tax of £1 10*s.* on the heaviest carts is not excessive, for they will still be paying less than a brougham with two horses, although causing much more wear and tear to the roads. I have had many suggestions that bicycles and tricycles should be taxed; but I have not come to any conclusion to impose such a tax. I do not say that there is in principle any objection to such a tax, and that a tax on bicycles and tricycles would not form a proper source of revenue; but I do not like to multiply little taxes of this description, and I recognize the great service that has been conferred on a vast number of young men, who, by means of bicycles and tricycles, are enabled to explore the country, so I do not propose to impose such a tax as part of the scheme. At the same time, however, as I have said, I do not think there would be any great objection to such a tax.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to extend the Carriage Tax to Ireland?

MR. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; I do not propose to extend the Carriage Tax to Ireland; but I will deal with that in a moment. I am obliged to the hon. Member for reminding me that I must deal with Ireland. Having got through this first licence tax somewhat better than I expected, I now approach with some trepidation——

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: How much will this tax produce?

MR. GOSCHEN: £150,000.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The two—the Cart Tax and the Wheel Tax?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No; the two will produce £300,000. The tax on the heavy carts, with which there is absolutely no sympathy, as far as I can see, will produce £150,000, and the light vehicles, which are very lightly taxed, and with which there is a great deal of sympathy, will also contribute £150,000, making, in all, £300,000.

I now approach with some trepidation the next licence duty. Many fantastic guesses and reports have been hazarded as to the taxes about to be imposed, and one hon. Member has heard it reported, I believe, that it would be proposed to put a tax on bakers' licences. I should like to see the hon. Member who would venture to get up and propose to put a licence tax on bakers. No; I look to an older friend—to a tax which existed for very many years, and which was then taken off—the duty which used to be imposed upon horses of every kind, and which was repealed in 1874. The old duty was imposed on all horses, whether they were engaged in trade or otherwise, and it was a duty of 10*s.* 6*d.* I do not propose to tax what I may call trade horses, or horses used in agriculture; but I do propose, not in order to fill what for the moment I may call my own Exchequer, but, for the purposes of local finance, to impose a tax of £1 on pleasure horses—[*Cries of* "Oh!"] [An hon. Member: Hobby horses!] I am afraid there is not the same satisfaction in regard to this £1 duty as in regard to the licence tax on heavy vehicles. Hon. Members will see that I put the cart before the horse. But let me remind hon. Members on whom this tax will fall. It will fall a good deal on what I may term the well-to-do classes. Hon. Members must bear in mind, too, that this tax will go in aid of local rates and towards relieving their constituents from burdens of which they now continually complain, and that it will be a contribution from those who are better able to pay it than the ordinary ratepayers. Then, again, it is an old tax which formerly was put on all horses, but which I now propose only to impose on horses of a certain class. Brood mares and young horses not yet in use will be exempted from the tax entirely; but, on the other hand, racehorses will have to pay a licence tax of £5. Horse dealers will pay a composition duty of £15. This Horse Tax is estimated to produce £540,000. The Committee will feel that it is impossible for me, in dealing with the multiplicity of subjects to which I have to refer, to justify all my proposals with as much argument as possibly they might require; I must content myself with rapidly and feebly sketching the main arguments in their favour. But I will say this—that it is only right that those who use the roads should pay contributions towards them, and I also think it is right that, in endeavouring to relieve the ratepayers, we should be careful in our re-arrangement to see that the new burdens fall on the shoulders of those who are best able to bear them.

Now, let us see how localities will be benefited in the coming year by the proposed arrangement in England and Wales. The allowance in respect of Probate Duty will amount to £1,136,000, the new Wheel Tax to £300,000, and the Horse Tax to £540,000, making up a total of £1,976,000, or, it may be said in round numbers, £2,000,000. This will be distributed temporarily as follows—this will be the effect this year:—there will be a relief given to the Local Authorities of 4*d.* for every indoor pauper, which will amount to £1,200,000; then there will be the sum of £520,000 given to County Authorities for main roads; and, lastly, there will be the grant to the Metropolis and boroughs of about £250,000 for their roads and streets. I ought to add that I propose to introduce the Horse Tax and the Wheel Tax in a separate Bill, because they do not really affect the Imperial Budget at all. It would be un-Constitutional, I think, to have introduced these taxes in the Bill of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie), otherwise I would have had the greatest pleasure in allowing him to deal with them in that measure. When the time comes and we proceed to business, and this Bill is before the House, it will be for the ratepayers and the ratepayers' friends to fight it out with those who may not be so enamoured of these new licence taxes. They will not affect the Imperial Revenue, but I believe them to be just taxes, and that the ratepayers will find them to afford an equitable arrangement.

And now I must state how Scotland and Ireland will be affected. The Committee will observe that we surrender from the Imperial Exchequer one-third of the Probate Duty—and by Probate Duty Scotch Members will understand me as including inventory duty. Now the question arises on what principle this ought to be distributed between the three countries—whether this surrender in respect of Probate Duty ought to be based or not on the locality where the duty is paid? [Colonel NOLAN: No, no!] An hon. Member from Ireland interrupts me with what I was going to say. I recognize that it would be unjust to Ireland to deal with it in that manner; and as I am always anxious, apart from political differences which separate us here from many of the Irish Members, to do full justice to Ireland from a fiscal point of view, I have examined this matter with peculiar care. I find that of the Probate Duty 85 per cent is paid in England, 10 per cent in Scotland, and 5 per cent in Ireland; and, therefore, if we proceeded on the principle of handing back to the countries the proportion of the Probate Duty which they pay, Ireland would come off very badly indeed. I do not, however, propose to adopt that principle. I propose to adopt the following system, which I hope will commend itself to the sense of justice of the Committee—namely, to withdraw this amount from the Imperial Exchequer, and to give each country a share of it in proportion to the general contributions of that country to the Exchequer. On this principle, England will be entitled to 80 per cent, Scotland to 11 per cent, and Ireland to 9 per cent. This division is, if anything, a little too favourable to Ireland, as its contributions are in reality only 8·7 per cent; but I have felt obliged to give the benefit of the doubt to the poorer country. I must further state that we propose to extend the Wheel Tax and the Horse Tax to Scotland, though this, again, is a question for the Scotch ratepayer. If so extended, they would go in relief of the Scotch ratepayer, precisely in the same way as the same taxes levied in England will go to the relief of the English ratepayer. This calculation will give to Scotland for the year 1888-9 on account of Probate Duty £156,000, which, with £84,000 in respect of the new Wheel Tax and Horse Tax, which are to be extended to Scotland, will give £240,000 in aid of local taxation. These sums I propose to have paid over to a fund standing in the name of the Secretary for Scotland, the first charge upon which will be a sum of £70,000 for main roads, which is double the grant put down in the Estimates of this year, a grant, which, as in the case of England, will be withdrawn. The balance will be distributed in a manner to be hereafter settled by the Secretary for Scotland and his advisers, according to the general views of Scotch ratepayers. From April, 1889, the relief to Scotland will be increased by about £80,000 more, as she will then begin to get her share of half the Probate Duty and not only of one-third. Ireland will receive for the year 1888-9 from the Probate Duty £127,000 on the basis of the calculation just explained—that is to say, 9 per cent. Irish Members will, however, of course, bear in mind that they will get one-half as much again next year, for they will then receive their share of one-half of the Probate Duty, instead of one-third. This sum will be paid to a special fund, as in the case of Scotland, and the distribution of it will fall on the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Proposals will be made to Parliament on the subject. My own leaning, I may frankly say, is in favour of relieving the county cess in some form or other. That is the course I should be disposed to suggest; but hon. Members, both from Scotland and Ireland, will forgive me if, owing to the vast number of topics I have had to deal with in my Budget and Conversion Scheme, I have been unable to give this matter of Budgets for Ireland and Scotland that narrow and careful consideration which it deserves. I have done my best, however, to see that—however the money may be allocated—as respects the amount of the money handed over to them, these two countries shall be dealt with in strict conformity with every principle of justice. Of course, also, adjustment will be made to compensate Scotland and Ireland for any loss which might arise from the surrender of licences in England; but the sum required, when the time comes, will not be considerable, and it is unnecessary to enter into that question now.

I have concluded that portion of my task which deals with local finance and with the Local Budget; and hon. Members, I am sure, will excuse the length at which I have spoken, remembering that I have not had to deal with one Local Budget only, but with two Local Budgets, or rather with four, if I include Scotland and Ireland. Now, I will ask the Committee to go back with me, after this long digression, to that surplus, steadily diminishing, of which I have spoken. The original sum was £2,377,000. From that I must give up one-third of the Probate Duty, amounting to £1,420,000. This reduces the surplus to £957,000. On the other hand, I take back the grants to main roads in England and Scotland provided in the Estimates, and amounting to £295,000. This brings the surplus up to £1,252,000, and, adding £50,000 in respect of Succession Duty, I get a total of £1,302,000.

Before I consider what can be done with the bulk of that surplus, there are two or three remissions of taxation which I wish to propose. Hon. Members will have seen that there has been a great deal of discussion lately in the Press with reference to the Carriage Tax. I have been asked by those who are chiefly interested not to hand over the Carriage Tax to the Local Authorities, because they—the persons who are interested—have more confidence in the Imperial Parliament and in the officers of the Inland Revenue than in the new Local Authorities, by whom they themselves will be represented. They are anxious that we should deal with the tax, and accordingly we have determined, in view of this fact, to put the tax on a more satisfactory footing, and to remove some of the grievances which exist in connection with it. The principal grievance in connection with the Carriage Tax has hitherto been the limit of weight. Up to 4 cwt. four-wheel carriages pay 15*s*., and over 4 cwt. they pay two guineas. This is a heavy tax on the cheaper kind of carriages over 4 cwt., such as the ordinary fly; and it has been urged on me—I do not know to what extent with justice—that this limit of weight discourages the production of well-made carriages. I, therefore, propose a new scale of duties—namely, for all two-wheel carriages, 15*s*.; for four-wheel carriages, of whatever weight, drawn by one horse, £1 1*s*.; for four-wheel carriages drawn by two or more horses, or having pair-horse fittings, £2 2*s*.; for hackney carriages, and all carriages kept by hotel-keepers, 15*s*.; and for carriages let on hire for less than three months by coachmakers and others, also 15*s*.—for it has been urged on me as a considerable grievance that in the case of carriages which are only intermittently used, and for short periods, the full duty should be charged. For carriages used for the first time after October the 1st in any year, half the above rates of duty will be payable. This plan, I think, will give substantial relief to the jobmasters, and meet the complaints of those concerned in the manufacture of carriages. The operation will involve a loss to the Revenue of £30,000.

Another contemplated small remission is in connection with Schedule A of the Income Tax. In 1881 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) gave relief, under Schedule A, to persons having land thrown on their hands and making no profit out of it; but, as the exemption then given was interpreted, it did not apply to lands habitually held in hand. Let me explain. My right hon. Friend only exempted those who tried to let their land and failed to do so. There is, however, a large class of yeoman farmers who never tried to let their land; and these, although they may make no profit, are still exposed to the tax, being excluded from the benefit of my right hon. Friend's exemption. Now, I propose to extend that exemption to lands which are *bonâ fide* worked for husbandry by their owners, whether they have tried to let them or not. I have had many representations that men farming their own land have for years been paying taxes on profits which they have not made. I propose to extend the exemption so that it shall apply to all lands occupied by their owners, provided they cultivate with a view to deriving profit, but as a matter of fact derive no profit. Hon. Members will understand that the exemption which I propose will not be given to those who have model farms and incur great expenditure for other than the ordinary purposes of husbandry. The exemption will only be extended to land occupied by the owner farming for purposes of husbandry and with a view to profit. Of course, it is not meant to relieve those who farm land near their mansions simply for the sake of certain amenities derived from such farming. This exemption will involve a loss of about

£20,000. Let me here mention another circumstance. Hon. Members may remember that last year I stated that farmers under Schedule B could claim to be assessed as traders under Schedule D if they should so elect; but the difficulty caused by the insufficiency of the accounts kept by farmers has stood in the way of their availing themselves of this privilege. Some of the best friends of the farmers have told me that, even where the idea found favour with the farmers, it was, nevertheless, difficult to put it into practice on account of the state of their accounts. I do not think, therefore, that my suggestion has been widely adopted, but where it has been adopted I think it has had a great effect. About 160 farmers did return themselves as traders, having been assessed before under Schedule B at £22,000. On that sum they would have had to pay or go through all the forms of appeal; but they accepted the new system, exhibited their accounts before the Income Tax Commissioners, and paid, not upon £22,000, but upon £2,500. I do not think that it is very prudent to make this revelation showing the relief which farmers may get by going under Schedule D. But while I am most anxious to secure for the Revenue every legitimate contribution, I have no desire, through any breakdown of machinery or through the difficulties of appeal, to compel men to pay on profits which they do not make, especially at a time when they are in a position of great difficulty in consequence of the depression of agriculture. Therefore, I have mentioned these circumstances at the risk of encouraging agriculturists to come under Schedule D in large numbers. While upon this subject I may mention as, perhaps, a significant fact, that half the farmers who availed themselves of this new method of paying the tax were Scotchmen.

The last of the small exemptions which I propose affects the licence duty upon hawkers. I dare say that many hon. Members are not aware that there is a licence duty on hawkers. The duty amounts to £4. It is collected all at one time, and it is very difficult indeed for poor men to pay it. It is difficult to collect, and weighs heavily upon a particular class, and I propose, therefore, to repeal it. The origin of this imposition was that hawkers paid no rates. It was thought that they competed unfairly with traders and shopkeepers who did pay rates. But now, at a time when we are doing our best to relieve ratepayers, it cannot be an improper moment to select to relieve also this small class from a charge which seems to be a hard burden when their scanty earnings are considered. The loss to the Revenue involved in this exemption will be £25,000. This figure shows that there is a considerable number of persons who pay the tax at the present time.

These three reductions in respect of the Carriage Tax, Schedule A, and the hawkers, amount together to £75,000, and reduce my balance from £1,302,000 to £1,227,000. I now arrive at the interesting question of what is to be done with this balance, from which I must take sufficient to provide a surplus of at least £200,000 to carry over to next year. That leaves me a balance of about £1,000,000. I wish to recall to the Committee the view I presented at an earlier stage of my Statement—namely, that the Income Tax falls with special weight upon the poorer middle class; and both from great political and Imperial considerations, and from the point of view of the weight of the Income Tax upon the professional classes, and the less prosperous section of the trading and farming class, I should like to see my way to take off another 1*d.* I spoke of Imperial considerations. The Income Tax is one of those taxes to which we have recourse upon every emergency, and whenever we can we ought to be able to rely upon this great instrument for prompt financial assistance. Twopence on the Income Tax means an ultimate increase of £4,000,000 and an immediate increase of £3,000,000. It is an enormous and powerful engine, and the question is whether, in a time of profound peace, it is right to keep the Income Tax above 6*d.*, or whether every effort ought not to be made to reduce it to that figure. The Income Tax payers are certain victims of every extraordinary emergency; and although they may not be able to escape a high tax even in a time of profound peace, they ought, nevertheless, to be able to have immunity from an amount above 6*d.* The rich can afford to pay it, and, as I understand, are ready at every moment to pay it; but the peculiarity of the tax is that it falls so heavily upon the struggling professional and business man. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, said, in his great speech in 1853—"The operation of the Income Tax taken alone is severe upon intelligence and skill as compared with property."

Well, then, I would wish to be able to take off this 1*d.* But it will be seen that to take off the 1*d.* I should require £1,550,000, while I have only £1,000,000 at my disposal. How is that to be effected? Well, Mr. Courtney, I looked round to see upon what resources I might possibly lay my hands. Many suggestions have been made to me as regards new taxes. I will only deal with one—not, strictly speaking, a new tax, but one to which a great deal of public attention has been attracted. I receive innumerable suggestions that revolvers ought to be taxed. The extraordinary thing is that revolvers, if used, are taxed at this moment; but many people are unaware that they ought to pay the tax, and that they are evading the law of the land if they use their revolvers and do not pay duty upon them. I have been asked if the duty on revolvers is to remain as it is now; and my reply is that the Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with that question. But we propose to deal with that question as I think it ought to be dealt with—that is to say, rather as a matter of police than of finance. I prefer, therefore, not to encumber my Budget with a tax upon revolvers. So I have still to look and see where £550,000 can be found to enable me to reduce the Income Tax. And in the first place, let us inquire, are there not any exemptions which ought to be removed? Are there exemptions by neglect or evasion, or are there exemptions by force of law? There is one exemption by evasion, a neglect of which those Members who are familiar with the Law Courts may have heard. That occurs when persons who are bound to stamp certain instruments do not stamp them until they are produced in Court, and then pay the stamp to make the instruments valid. In a large number of other cases it is notorious that Stamp Duty is evaded. I shall propose certain clauses to make the application of the existing law somewhat more stringent, and in that attempt I know I shall have the support of the whole Committee, because there can be no wish that existing stamp laws should be enacted, and that by evasion people should not contribute to the Revenue that which is expected from them, and which it is a legal and bounden duty to pay. We propose to introduce a clause insuring greater stringency in the enforcement of existing obligations, which we believe will raise the revenue from stamps by at least £50,000.

What I have just referred to is an exemption by neglect. But there are some exemptions by law, and in inviting the Committee to consider these I am borne up by the feeling that I am approaching the end of my task, and that hon. Members who have followed me through the somewhat intricate proposals I have had to submit to them will soon be able to cease to listen to my almost apparently interminable Statement. There are a large number of securities—I will use popular rather than technical and legal language—which have throughout, either partially or entirely, been exempt from Stamp Duties, while competing securities are paying very high duties. I find a total practical exemption upon some portion of these securities which is not justified by any principle, but has existed so long on account of the practical difficulty of dealing with them. Let me impress on the Committee the anomaly that now exists. On the one hand, as regards registered securities, comprising some of the most solid investments, passing by registered transfer, these highly-respectable securities pay on every transfer, on every journey, so to speak, which they take, 10*s.* per cent on the consideration. The Revenue levies its toll on them, and if they are sold four or five times in the year, £2 or £3 per cent may find its way into the Exchequer. But in the case of the transfer of securities to bearer it is impossible to collect the Stamp Duty in the same way. Before 1862 there were no stamps upon securities to bearer. Between 1862 and 1885 there was something imposed which, to distinguish it from other forms of taxation, I may call a "Birth Tax" of 2*s.* 6*d.* upon every issue. In 1885, it being felt that these bearer bonds, with the solitary payment of 2*s.* 6*d.* on their first issue, were too advantageously placed as compared with their rivals, a circulation tax was put upon them of 7*s.* 6*d.*, making in all 10*s.* The state of things, therefore, is this. There are a great many high-class and solid securities which pay ½ per cent every time they are transferred. English securities to bearer, which you can get hold of because they are issued in England, now pay 10*s.* on issue, which is to clear them for ever from all payments on transfer. There are, however, others in this class which have only paid 2*s.* 6*d.* per cent, because they were issued before 1885, and they are now travelling from hand to hand without paying 1*s.* to the Revenue. Moreover, there is a considerable class of securities which are transferred from hand to hand without paying anything on transfer, and without having paid anything on their issue or introduction to this country. I believe an enormous number of transactions go on in American Shares on which no duty whatever is paid on issue or transfer, but which, in principle, ought to pay for their right to travel from hand to hand in the same way as others. The more solid the security the more it pays; the more fugitive the security the more it escapes duty. What we have to do is to see how we can hit these fugitive securities. The principle will be admitted on the Stock Exchange by the holders of these Stocks. We cannot manage to make them all pay a duty on their issue, because so many of the Companies which issue them are established abroad. Therefore, there are only two courses open to us—either to tax them in the hands of the first holders, after their arrival in this country, or to make them pay an annual tax, which shall be essential to a good delivery, as the phrase is, during a certain period.

The simplest plan would be to tax these securities in the hands of the first holder, because then you can make it a composition tax. But this has two great defects. In the first place, it would be considered very hard upon the first holder that he should have to pay the whole cost of freeing these securities from transfer duty; and, in the next place, I am not prepared to say that the Revenue ought to be satisfied with the composition duty of 10*s.* per cent to enable them to circulate from hand to hand for ever, while other securities pay 10*s.* per cent every time they are transferred. I want, if possible, to devise machinery by which an adequate Stamp Duty may be imposed, which may be distributed over a longer time, and over a larger number of people. I propose to do this by placing an adhesive stamp of 1*s.* per cent per annum on the nominal value of all securities to bearer which are now circulated without having paid the stamp of 10*s.* per cent. The effect would be that such Stocks would not pass as a good delivery unless they bore the *ad valorem* stamp which I have mentioned for the year in which the transfer took place. If the securities do not change hands during any one year they will pay no duty for that year. There will be a stamp of 6*d.* under £50, and 1*s.* between £50 to £100. This, I believe, will bring in a Revenue of £200,000 to the Exchequer. Every effort will be made by the Inland Revenue to secure the advice of persons who are experts in such matters, in order that the inconvenience, which can be the only objection to the tax, shall not be large. Some inconvenience there must be, and there will be, I admit. On the other hand, I think the Committee will come to the conclusion that whatever difficulties exist must be met, and that on no ground should these securities be allowed to retain their absolute immunity from a Stamp Duty which is paid by every other class of property. The duty, I believe, is so small that it cannot be argued that it will in any way impede business. But, however that may be, I venture to think this step must positively be taken. It has been difficult for me to consult with all those who are concerned in this matter, but I shall be glad of any practical suggestions, and the Inland Revenue will do all in their power to avail themselves of such suggestions; I can, however, hold out no hope that the tax, in some form or other, will not be imposed. I would say to those who are acquainted with the matter that if they can suggest a better method of raising the duty every consideration shall be given to it. I only lay down two principles—namely, that the existing immunity of these securities cannot be allowed to continue, and that whatever method of taxing them is adopted must promise at least about £200,000 a-year, which is the minimum that they ought, on any reasonable calculation, to pay. I have only to add, on this point, that there is another small change which I propose in the Stamp Duty with regard to a certain class of registered bonds which pay now 6*d*. on transfer. That amount will be raised to 10*s*., as in the case of other securities of a similar character.

But after a Stamp Duty has been imposed on these securities it is nevertheless certain that it will be impossible to reach all the transactions, because so large a number take place where there is no delivery of Stock at all, and where Stocks are simply bought and sold, and contract notes pass from one person to another. I propose to make a slight but notable change in this respect. A contract note at present bears a stamp of 1*d*. I propose to raise that 1*d*. to 6*d*. I have no doubt that the brokers will be able to charge the 6*d*. to their clients in addition to their brokerage, and so the amount will be distributed over a very wide area. This change will give me another £50,000.

So far every point I have touched upon has related to the abolition of an exemption which ought to be abolished, and I have been engaged in equalizing, rather than in adding to, taxation. There is one more item of a somewhat similar character with which I have to deal. It is a slight adjustment of the tax upon the issue of Companies under the Limited Liability Acts, which will fall upon new Companies and upon the new issues of old Companies. And here I have high authority. The Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade in their last Report state that—

> "The creation of Companies might be to some extent restrained if the fee for registration, which is now very low in proportion to the nominal capital, were increased; and the attention of the Legislature might, in our opinion, be advantageously directed to this point, both in the interest of Revenue and in the interest of legitimate trade."

We propose, without touching the fee stamp on the memorandum of association, to impose an *ad valorem* duty of £1 per £1,000 on registration, whatever the amount of the nominal capital may be. It is not a large tax. A nominal capital of £500,000 will pay a tax of £500; and if it acts as a check on these Limited Liability Companies putting a very much larger nominal capital in their prospectuses or memorandums of association than they ever intend to employ, that, I think, will be a salutary provision which will in no way tend to check legitimate business. From that source of Revenue I gain £110,000, and I have now towards the £500,000 or £550,000 which I require a total of £410,000.

But I have not yet enough. I must still cast my eyes around me in order to secure some further slight addition to the Revenue. Hon. Members will see that in seeking to make up this amount, which is to enable me to take 1*d*. off the Income Tax, I have not had recourse to any taxation levied on the great articles of consumption; I have not had recourse in any way to the earnings of professional or business men, but to what I believe the Committee will consider to be more legitimate sources of Revenue for my present purpose. I do not know what hon. Members will say to the tax which I am now about to propose. I turn to a source of Revenue which, perhaps, will give a not very pleasant surprise to some Members of this House. There is one taxable commodity which is not at the disposal of the great consuming classes, but which is essentially a luxury of the well-to-do. I cast my eyes upon wine—not on the cheap wines, for the introduction of which the public is so deeply indebted to my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, but those finer wines which, if an *ad valorem* duty were imposed upon them, would pay more than they now pay when the test of the amount of duty is alcoholic strength. The alcoholic test is the best which the authorities have been able to devise for taxing a commodity of which alcohol may be a pleasing and a necessary part, but is certainly not that element which is most attractive in the opinion of epicures in the matter of wine. The fact that the duty is levied on the amount of the spirit which wine contains puts the same tax, and in some cases a higher tax, on cheap wines than on wines of the highest quality. Some of the most expensive wines are of low alcoholic strength, and yet they are taxed no more than the cheaper wines. Quality and value cannot be measured by mechanical or analytical processes. There is only one way to get at the high class and costly wines, and that is to reach them in an indirect manner, and I propose to effect that by recurring to a tax which was imposed in 1861, and which lasted till 1866, when it was taken off, not on account of any inherent defects, but in consequence of the representations of Powers, with whom we were then engaged in some very delicate commercial negotiations. From 1861 to 1865 there was a tax on bottled wines. These wines are, for the most part, synonymous with high class and costly wines, and they are, especially in the present day, champagnes. It is very possible that an extra tax imposed upon these high-class wines may lead to some remonstrances from Foreign Powers; but I am bound to say that remonstrances of ours to Foreign Powers with regard to impositions of duties on British goods have not been so entirely successful as to make it necessary for us, more than is absolutely compatible with our own interests, to look beyond the fiscal merits of the question. The system of *ad valorem* taxation, which in some cases is so admirable in practice, is almost impossible in that of wine. But you may arrive roughly at the same result by putting an extra tax on bottled wines, which will in most cases not affect the cheaper class of wines, because they are, or can be, imported in the wood, but will fall upon the more costly sort of wine—an article not of necessity, but of pleasure, yet which is becoming one of almost daily use. I propose a tax of 5*s*. per dozen on bottled wines, which is equivalent to 2*s*. 6*d*. a-gallon. Originally, the idea was to impose a duty of 6*s*. a-dozen, but in that case the merchant would argue that he must have something to recoup him for the additional capital advanced to meet the new impost, and he would put on an extra charge of 1*s*. a-bottle, because he had had to pay 6*d*. a-bottle more duty. But this duty of 5*s*. a-dozen will enable the wine merchant to recoup himself, even if he charges only 6*d*. extra per bottle. I estimate this tax to bring in an additional revenue of £125,000. I take note, in making this estimate, of the probable, nay certain, diminution of the amount of wine which may at present be imported in bottle, and which will in future be imported in casks. It is possible that the bottling trade in England may receive a certain impetus, but I cannot conceive that that is an objection to the plan. What we have to look to is to fine wines such as Margaux, Lafitte, La Rose, and the more expensive class of champagnes, which must continue to be imported in bottle as before. I trust hon. Members will not grudge the imposition of this tax; but I admit that the greater portion of this additional tax will have to be borne by sparkling wines. If any hon. Members regret that I have taxed wine, as I have, to a certain extent, put taxes on the more speculative class of transactions, let them remember what I hope will be the outcome of all these details—namely, that we make a great step in the direction of securing that the Income Tax shall be reduced to 6*d*. I have calculated that if a man with £2,000 a-year should receive a remission of 1*d*. in the Income Tax, he would be able to afford to drink a bottle of champagne at the increased price—that is to say 6*d*. extra, every day in the year. The recipient of £1,000 a-year would be able to indulge in this luxury every other day in the year, or to have one pint, paying 3*d*. extra for it, every day. If by this means we secure to the Revenue a slightly larger contribution from the club man, who lives in chambers and pays few rates or taxes, I do not think he will complain when he reflects that he, too, is a citizen, and ought to share the burdens of his fellows. And now I have come to the end of my list, and I am rejoiced to think that I have put together a surplus amounting to £1,762,000, and am able to deduct my 1*d*. from the Income Tax. That deduction will involve a loss of £1,550,000, leaving me a balance of £212,000.

I have now reached the goal at which I wished to arrive—of being able in this year, without placing any new taxes upon persons who cannot well bear them—of being able to relieve to a great extent—to a notable extent—the ratepayers of the country, and at the same time to make what I hope will be considered a substantial relief in the direction of Imperial taxation.

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And now I have only one paragraph more in the Statement which I have to lay before the Committee. The circumstances of the time have imposed the necessity upon us of not only looking to the next year, but to the year after next. We shall then have to surrender an additional sixth part of the Probate Duty, and also to make good the difference between the grants in aid which are taken back and the licences handed over, and the two operations will, taken together, cost us £1,400,000. The circumstances of the case are such that we have been obliged to settle once for all the contributions to local expenditure, so as to place them upon a firmer basis. I do not consider myself entitled to take into account the probable increase of the Revenue in the course of two years, nor the revival of trade which we hope to see thoroughly established. I must contemplate, and the Committee must contemplate, the possibility that this sum may have to be raised; but, on the other hand, it is impossible to enact taxes before the Bill is passed, before we know what the contingent payments will be. But I would wish to lay down certain propositions with regard to the mode by which this sum ought to be met. I will state it in the strongest way negatively. It must not be met by any increase of duties which rest upon the industrial class. It must not be met by any duties resting upon the earnings of the mass of the people. It must not be derived from duties contributed by professional men, by industry, and by skill. But it must be met by duties on property or the result of property, or from that promising item of stamps, from which I have already reaped a certain advantage, but which is by no means an exhausted field. I will not point to the fact that in the year after next there will be available for the disposal of my Successor, if I should have one by then, a sum which may amount to £1,000,000, if the Conversion Scheme is successful. I will not take that into account, because I wish to reserve the application of that amount; and I do not wish to pledge Parliament, or the Government, or myself, as to whether the whole, or a portion, or none of it, should be employed in the remission of taxation, or, on the other hand, in the diminution of the Public Debt. My right hon. Friend admitted that it was fair to reserve such determination until we could see what would be the resources at our disposal when the conversion had reached a certain stage. But there, at all events, it stands, a sum, I hope, of about £1,000,000, which will be added to the national resources in the year 1889-90, and will be followed by a yet larger sum in the following year. This is a contingency which I have a right to indicate, but which I have not taken into account. I have stated the sources from which I believe this gap ought to be met, by duties on property and the results of property, from stamps, or from some re-arrangement of the Death Duties, or from taxes of that class.

And now I rejoice to think I have come to the end of my long and I fear almost interminable story. The subjects have been so vast, so complicated, that it has really been impossible for me to attempt to do justice to most of them. I should have been glad to have built up step by step as I passed on a rampart of solid masonry, so to speak, in the shape of argument, around every proposal I have made. I feel that during the comparatively short time I have had to devote to each several point, I may have left positions undefended which will be bombarded by heavy guns in the course of the discussion which will ensue. On the other hand, the amount of work arising out of the great Conversion Scheme, concerning which, I am happy to say, there is every indication of its being successful, has put it out of my power to devote as much time to the preparations of my statement as might possibly have resulted in my being able to condense my remarks. Hence I have omitted many great subjects. Perhaps my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) will think that I ought to have dealt with that fiscal change he advocates in the shape of some form of Fair Trade; but I have had to enter into too many discussions arising out of the proposals I have made to enter into the discussion of proposals I cannot accept. There is an omission of a different kind which I regret even more. I should have liked to refer to the important subjects of light gold and of the circulation, which I touched upon last year in my Budget Speech, and upon which I have been engaged, and measures for dealing with which are in an advanced stage. I hope still, looking to the facilities which the House of Commons now kindly gives for the discussion of Business, that I may be able to submit proposals on these subjects for the consideration of the House even in the present year. But, at any rate, I have placed before the House the main financial proposals of the Government. We have tried to consider the interest of the ratepayer as well as of the taxpayer; we have endeavoured, as far as we can, to be just to both. I have felt, and I feel, the extreme difficulty of the adjustments between the two vast fields of Imperial and Local Taxation. But, at least, we have endeavoured to lay before the House proposals conceived in a just and liberal spirit, and we submit them with some confidence to the favourable consideration of the Committee and the country.

(1,) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):—

Tea . . . the pound . . . Sixpence."

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I think there is one point on which every hon. Member of the House will agree. I ask the cordial assent of the Committee when I say that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. throughout the three hours and a quarter during which he has addressed us, has held the attention of the Committee thoroughly, and has made himself perfectly clear to all those who take an interest in finance, with regard to the proposals he has placed before us. We desire, whatever may be our opinions, either on the spur of the moment, or when we have had time to consider them, to thank him for placing those proposals before us in so explicit and clear a manner. I have very little to add to these words, for the present is not the occasion for criticizing the details of the Budget; and, therefore, I postpone any criticisms I may have to make upon the principles of the right hon. Gentleman's Budget, or their application, until the more appropriate opportunity which will present itself on the adoption of the Resolutions in Committee or Second Reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. But before I sit down I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one or two questions. I wish to ask him, in the first place, whether he has any objection to circulate at once, not to-morrow, but as soon as he possibly can, a Paper showing in detail the proposals he has made to the Committee? I followed the right hon. Gentleman through his whole speech, and I think he will not blame me if I say that the number of figures and calculations which he has placed before us is so large that it is not possible for anyone to carry them away in his mind so as to understand them thoroughly, even though we may supplement our recollection by reading the report of his speech in the newspapers. I therefore ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will, in the first place, give us a Paper showing the details of his proposals? Probably, if it is laid *pro formâ* on the Table of the House to-morrow, a Paper could be circulated in a day or two, showing not only the details of his proposals, but also more minute figures relating to the Revenue and Expenditure of the last and coming year, which, considering how lengthy his statement necessarily was, he has very wisely, I think. curtailed. For instance, I think my right hon. Friend gave us no details whatever as to the charges on the Consolidated Fund beyond the Debt totals. It has, I think, been always usual to give these details; but my right hon. Friend has not mentioned them at all. I see that my right hon. Friend admits that I am asking nothing unusual, and I think we may also ask him to give us some more details of Revenue. If my right hon. Friend will do that, I think he will greatly assist the discussion which will take place in a few days. I was glad that, with reference to future years, my right hon. Friend exercised some caution by warning the Committee on one subject particularly—namely, as to what will be the prospective effect of the Budget which, although it leaves for 1888-9 a certain surplus, contemplates that unless a marked improvement in trade or economy in expenditure takes place the deficit of 1889-90 will be serious. The right hon. Gentleman will forgive me for saying that, in speaking of the prospective deficit, he omitted to refer to one very important item—that is, the loss of Income Tax as between 1889 and 1890.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I may, perhaps, meet that point at once. The loss upon the Income Tax will probably be made up by the natural increase in the average incomes of the country. In calculating the probable Revenue, we must not forget that we have passed through some bad years, and are now approaching a year in which we hope to receive more from the Income Tax.

Mr. CHILDERS: I am glad to hear that from the right hon. Gentleman. I did not at all refer to the subject as a matter for blame, and the information which my right hon. Friend will give us in print will, no doubt, make this matter perfectly plain. Again, my right hon. Friend promised last year that the subject of light gold coinage was one which he would bring this year before Parliament. I presume that the conversion of the light gold coinage will involve a heavy charge this year.

Mr. GOSCHEN: No increased charge will be involved in the conversion.

Mr. CHILDERS: I am glad to hear that statement; but I must remind my right hon. Friend that he has two alternatives—either to make a proposal which will create a charge upon the year, or to make a proposal which will make no such charge; he must do one of two things if he brings forward a proposal with regard to the light gold coinage during the present year; and if the plan involves a charge it will diminish his surplus. [Mr. Goschen: No.] My right hon. Friend is very ingenious, and I will give him credit for finding out some third plan; but let me impress upon him that the state of the gold coinage is so extremely bad, and has got so much worse since I was unfortunately unable, through the early Prorogation, to carry out the proposal I made to the House four years ago, that whereas, for instance, one-half of the half-sovereigns were light then, there are, I believe, three-quarters of them light at the present time.

Mr. GOSCHEN: A scheme of the character indicated by the right hon. Gentleman is in an advanced stage of preparation.

Mr. CHILDERS: I rejoice at the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, as I know that it is most important that there should be no delay in dealing with this subject. As there is no pressing necessity for the Resolutions which have been placed in the hands of the Chairman, I would put it to the Committee that they should not be debated this evening, but that we should adjourn the present debate.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I hope that right hon. Gentlemen opposite will not object to pass the Resolutions relating to the Wine Duties and Income Tax, because if the former is not passed to-night large quantities of wine will be taken out of bond to-morrow and sold during the rest of the year free of the increased duty. My right hon. Friend will understand also, with regard to the Income Tax, that the dividends are payable on the 5th of April; and if the Committee will assent to the remission of the one penny of Income Tax it will, of course, enormously facilitate the collection of the Revenue for the year, and avoid the great labour that would otherwise be incurred. Of course, I have no right to press this, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite do not see their way; but I am sure they will appreciate the difficulty now that the dividends are so shortly payable, and perceive that it would be a very great assistance if the Committee will deal rapidly with these two Resolutions.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I think that the appeal of the right hon.

Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) on the subject of the Wine Duties ought to be assented to without objection; but as to the Income Tax, it seems to me impossible that we should proceed with the Resolution now. I believe with my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) that no Resolution on that subject has ever been taken on the first night of the Budget when there has been a change of duty. Everyone who has listened to the very able statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will see that in consequence of the proposed change many other taxes are to be imposed; and I do not think we should give any opinion on this matter now. There are one or two points on which I should like some further details. I do not in the least complain of the right hon. Gentleman for not having given us full details of the items of Revenue; but if he will let us have them in a printed form it would be interesting to the House. The right hon. Gentleman stated that in the Customs of last year there was a falling off of £80,000; and I cannot make out what are the items in which an increase of duty has taken place that would so countervail that as to result ultimately in an increase of £30,000 on Customs. Then the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the great increase in the Probate Duty. I think he will find that last year either my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers), or I, told him we thought he was taking his stand too low. The real truth is, that there has been of late years a disposition—I do not know why — to undervalue the Stamp Duties. The Stamp Duties have almost invariably exceeded the estimates made of them. This year they have, no doubt, exceptionally increased. I would say for the consolation of my hon. Friend the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) and others, who think that we have for the last 40 years or more been pursuing a ruinous commercial policy, that, if we had been pursuing a policy injurious to our trade and to our interests, we should not have found the realized wealth of the country constantly increasing beyond our expectations. Two years ago, when people were in despair about the prosperity of the country, I was criticized severely because I would not believe that all the interests of the country were ruined. One of the points I especially insisted upon was the increase in the Probate Duty. In 1886 I mentioned that then the Probate Duty had reached the highest point it had ever obtained, and now I am glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Probate Duty has reached a still higher point. I think we may judge from that that the apprehension which existed some years ago as to the general distress of the country was ill founded, and that, also, we may believe that the system we are pursuing is one which is not really injurious to the interests of the country. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has prided himself upon the large reduction he has effected in the Debt. I may be allowed, in all good humour, to tell him he has been a reducer of the Debt *malgré lui*, because he reduced the provision made for the reduction of the Debt by £2,000,000. What has really reduced the Debt is the existing law of the old Sinking Fund, which has appropriated his surplus—his surplus of £2,000,000 — to the reduction of the Debt. The fact is, that the surplus he has derived from the large yield of the Probate Duty has been by the operation of the law appropriated—I think I am right in so saying—to the reduction of the Debt. Owing to the prosperity of the country and the wisdom of previous legislation, though my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer took £2,000,000 off the new Sinking Fund, the £2,000,000 has reappeared under the old Sinking Fund. The reduction of the Debt is made, in spite of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by the operation of the law, through his surplus being applied to that. I should not have alluded to that but for the references to the savings the right hon. Gentleman has effected in the future upon the conversion of the Debt. If I am not wrong, the existing law would apply that money to the reduction of Debt; and I do hope that in future the House of Commons will not be a party to breaking down the law by which savings effected upon the interest will go in reduction of the Debt. I may point out to the House the enormous value of the old Sinking Fund under which I imagine the interest saved upon the Debt will go to the reduction of the capital of the Debt. See how it has operated. It operated in my time, to a certain extent, in reducing the Debt. It has operated to the amount of £2,000,000 in reducing the Debt in spite of the provision made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction of the new Sinking Fund. It is a provision of enormous value, and I hope the House of Commons will not be disposed to depart from it. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of his increased balances, and also of the balances as being a reduction of Debt. Now, I confess I think that is rather a loose doctrine. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knows very well that I have objected to the returns of the condition of the Debt in which the balances are shown as an asset. I know there are arguments both one way and the other. Certainly the whole of the balances cannot be spoken of as an asset. You might just as well, before you pay your Christmas Bills, talk of the balance at your bankers on the 24th of December as an asset, when you know perfectly well that the great part is going immediately in the discharge of debt. Of course, there is the nest egg of the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal, I will admit, has been a very fortunate speculation; but there is nothing so ruinous to a nation as to an individual to find its first speculation a successful one, because if a nation is to go into more speculations of this character, I think the results are likely to be very disastrous. I do hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not meditating putting any of these balances into the Panama Canal in consequence of the successes which have been achieved in the Suez Canal. I only hope we may be satisfied with the success of the Suez Canal, and that we may never repeat the experiment, because I am convinced if the nation speculates in transactions of this kind it will experience the fate which befalls individuals. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a very interesting reference to the farmers' schedule, or schedule B. The remarkable part of it, however, was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh made the same offer to the farmers some three years ago; but for some reason or other they did not at that time accept it. I only make these very incidental remarks because in the case of important proposals of the character the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made, one must take time to consider and to reserve his criticism for a future occasion. My right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh has alluded to what is the most serious feature of this Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget and in the Local Government Bill is going to enact charges for which he makes no future provision, or, at all events, but very imperfect provision. He has made charges which he will meet partially in the present year under the temporary arrangement, but the charges in the Local Government Bill and in the Budget will, I understand, be permanent charges which cannot be altered. For these he has made no provision. He has said very frankly that he has only made the provision which is necessary in the present year; for the year which is to come after that, charges will subsist, but there is no provision for them. That is a very serious financial omission, which has certainly not been usual in Imperial Budgets. That is a subject which will have hereafter to be very carefully considered, because, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not make provision in money, he made provision in a series of what I may call "financial moral sentiments." He concluded his speech by admitting that there would be a charge of £1,550,000 which would have to be met in the year after next; but he said that "It must not be met by this, it must not be met by that, and I will not tell you how it is to be met." That seems to me to be somewhat doubtful finance; but of course we shall have more opportunity of considering the point later on.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a statement which I hope he will explain a little more fully. The right hon. Gentleman told us over and over again that he is giving great advantages to the local ratepayers—that this is a Local Budget. I understand he intends to hand over to the local ratepayers £5,500,000, but that at the same time he takes away £2,600,000, which is now given in the form of grants in aid. That will leave a paltry £300,000. [*Cries of* "£3,000,000."] We get now £2,600,000, and we are to have £5,500,000. What remains to us is £2,900,000, and this is to be made up by additional taxation.

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman stated the figures correctly in the first instance, but did not do the sum. The total advance will be £5,500,000. From that you have to deduct £2,600,000, leaving not the paltry sum of £300,000, but £2,900,000, nearly £3,000,000. It is £3,000,000 fresh money.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer if I am right in supposing he told us that the whole of the Hawkers' Tax is to be repealed? I should also like him to tell us whether hawkers' carts will be taxed, and whether, if hawkers' licences are to be abolished, similar relief ought not to be given to the poorer class of vendors —the pedlars?

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I do not desire to go into what I may call the controversial points of this Budget, because I know that the House of Commons has now a very difficult task before it. It has the difficulty of dealing with the very able statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) in introducing the Local Government Bill as well as of dealing with the Budget, and there is the difficulty of considering the two combined. It seems to me that there are several points in this Budget which will require very great consideration. For instance, the proposal that a large amount of personalty should go in relief of the rates is one which we shall do well to consider very carefully. But I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the very able statement he has made. I think he was perfectly right in the beginning of his statement to pay a great tribute to the public servants. I am sure he must have taxed the abilities and the time of the public servants in the collection of the enormous array of facts and figures he has laid before the Committee. There are one or two points which I am sure the whole country will receive with satisfaction. Whatever may be the result of remitting a 1*d.* of the Income Tax, I am convinced that the right hon. Gentleman's endeavour to make the transactions on the Stock Exchange, which have hitherto paid nothing, bear their fair share towards the National Revenue, will be received with great satisfaction in the country. I only hope that the efforts of the right hon. Gentleman to lay hold of this portion of the revenue will not be frustrated by the difficulties which are sure to be thrown in his way. In my constituency there has been for years great complaint that the heavy vehicles were entirely free from toll, and that the farmers had to maintain the roads. I think the proposal to tax the class of large vehicles the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to £1 is a most righteous proposition. It is but proper that these vehicles should pay towards the wear and tear of the roads, of which they have been so large a user, and to which they do so much damage. With regard to the tax on wheels, I should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman could have seen his way to leave the farmers' carts untaxed.

MR. GOSCHEN: I thought I made it clear that carts employed in husbandry are not to be taxed.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for correcting me. Sitting below the Gangway I was not able to hear that he made any exception to the tax. The tax on horses of luxury is a most legitimate tax; but of all the alterations the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to make, I think the one which will give the greatest satisfaction is that he proposes to make in the Carriage Tax. I, for one, would have been glad if he had repealed the carriage tax, because I regard it very much in the light of a tax upon labour; but if we are to have a carriage tax, certainly the way the right hon. Gentleman proposes to deal with it is one which will remove a great deal of grievance. I must congratulate the Government upon the comparative absence of Supplementary Estimates. The amount of Supplementary Estimates they have brought in is very small, and I hope the example they have set will be followed in future. With regard to the more important points of the Budget, I desire to reserve any opinion I may have of them until I see further what are actually the right hon. Gentleman's propositions.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): Representing, as I do, an agricultural division which has been very hardly hit, and which has more land out of cultivation than almost any other county in the Kingdom, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the very large measure of relief he has promised us, and also upon the fact that he has fulfilled the hope which he raised in the minds of the deputation of agricultural Members who waited upon him about this day last year. I also wish to protest as strongly as I can against the statement that the relief the right hon. Gentleman is giving us is only a grant in aid of the squirearchy. This grant in aid is a grant in aid of agricultural labourers and farmers, and I do not think any hon. Gentleman on either side of the House will deny that we want the assistance which the right hon. Gentleman is going to give us. As I have said, we in South-East Essex have more land out of cultivation than any other county in the Kingdom; in fact, our farmers are divided practically into two categories — those who are ruined, and those who are going to be ruined. I do not want to pursue such an unpleasant subject; but I wish to assure the right hon. Gentleman that the farmers and labourers in the division I represent will remember very gratefully the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has been the first to bring the equalization of taxation of real and personal property into the area of practical politics, and who has done all he can to take undue burdens off the land.

Mr. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): After the long and exhaustive statement the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has addressed to us, I shall only ask him one question. I wish to know whether my impression is correct—that in addition to the present one-half per cent on the issue of Foreign Bonds, there is to be an annual tax of 1*s.* per cent on all Foreign Bonds and Stock Exchange transactions not now liable to duty? I also desire to say that the chosen representatives of the experts, to whom the right hon. Gentleman alluded, will certainly afford him every assistance in his power, without which assistance I am persuaded some of the proposals he has shadowed forth cannot be carried into effect.

Mr. AUSTIN (Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross): It will be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that some time ago an appeal was made to him concerning the great hardship suffered by some tenant farmers in having been called upon to pay Income Tax twice over. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will provide some remedy for such an unjust state of things.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): There are only one or two matters of minor importance which I wish to mention. When I had the honour, some years ago, of representing a division of Yorkshire, there was a great hardship felt by many of the small farmers in consequence of the tax on horses. The tax at that time was paid by them if by some chance they happened to use their horses for pleasure. I am sure it will be a great source of satisfaction to the small farmers in that district if, before the debate closes, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will assure us that horses used mainly for agricultural purposes will not be brought under taxation, because by some accident horses may be used from time to time by a farmer for his own pleasure and for the amusement of his family. The second point—I am ashamed to mention these small matters, but they are matters of practical interest—is the tax on carts. I have had for some time the honour of being a member of the Highway Committee in the West Riding of the county of Yorkshire, where there have been heavy rates in consequence of the enormously weighty burdens carried on the roads by traction engines. We have the power—and we exercise it—to levy toll on the locomotive itself in the shape of a licence; but we have no power to tax the carts. These carts, as we all know, form a long train, and their effect on the roads is most destructive. The roads are not constructed to bear heavy burdens. The mechanism of the roads is utterly annihilated, and passage along them by ordinary vehicles becomes almost impossible. I am delighted to hear the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, because that injustice will no longer be allowed. I have no doubt that when these carts are brought under taxation they will be used with greater moderation, and that improper use of roads will not continue. I congratulate the Government on their proposals. They are wide and far-reaching proposals; they do not relieve one class to the injury of another; but I believe they will prove a relief to many classes. I am sure the proposals will be received by the country with great thankfulness. There is one very humble class which has been for years groaning under taxation, and which will be relieved by the Government proposals, and that is the class of hawkers. I have sufficient knowledge of the feelings of magistrates to be able to say that no duty imposed on magistrates which is discharged by them with greater regret than the duty of fining hawkers without licences. Many of them are poor but industrious people, and the taxation levied upon them is a severe pressure upon their honest trade. The licence was intended as a prohibition upon what was regarded as a nuisance in the country; but it has acted most mischievously and has produced a great hardship upon these simple but deserving persons. I am glad that I have been permitted to make these observations. They are few, indeed, but perhaps they are not unworthy of some consideration amongst the larger questions which occupy our attention.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he only intended to touch upon the Budget from one point of view, and that was so far as it related to Irish interests. He looked upon this Budget as the third step in the very complete change which the English Treasury Bench had been effecting during the past three or four years in the financial relations of England and Ireland, and he was not at all sorry to have to discuss that change whilst the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) was in Office, because he rather liked the tone of that right hon. Gentleman in dealing with money matters. The right hon. Gentleman was the only person on the Treasury Bench who did not pretend to be generous to Ireland in money matters, and whilst not claiming to be generous he was the only one who tried to be just. The right hon. Gentleman discussed the matter from that point of view. Those who pretended to be generous were committing the grossest injustice to Ireland, from a pecuniary point of view. Ireland suffered this great disadvantage, that she had not had a single Member on the Treasury Bench during the past 30 or 40 years. The result was that the Irish Members were untrained in these subjects, and had many difficulties to contend with in considering and discussing them. There were three steps which had taken place in the monetary relations between England and Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman would recognize the fact. The first change occurred when the roads were disturnpiked. A modest sum of money was given to England and Scotland in regard to the operation then brought about; but as Ireland was not affected no equivalent was given to her. The old custom had been to put duties on England and not to put them on Ireland, and this was the first change in the direction of a subvention or a covert subvention. Nominally, Ireland was always better treated than England or Scotland; but in the case to which he (Colonel Nolan) referred, money was given to England and Scotland and not to Ireland, the reason advanced by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer then in Office being that no carriage duty was charged in Ireland. The amount given in the case of England and Scotland was an offset on the Carriage Tax. That was the first step. The second step came last year. He did not blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the fact was that additional moneys were given to England and Scotland — either £180,000 or £280,000, he forgot which. The Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time said he considered a gift of £50,000 to Ireland would be equivalent to the amount given to England and Scotland, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had followed out his opinions—because he spoke pretty much then as he had spoken to-night—the Irish Members would all of them have agreed with him. But that £50,000 had been frittered away; there were so many interests at stake, and the clerks and Government officials in Ireland got round the Government to such good purpose, inducing them to go in for fancy schemes of arterial drainage, and so on, that the money was actually wasted—at any rate, three-fifths of it had been spent. The great danger in dealing with Irish matters was that there were always two or three Members who understood the agricultural parts of Ireland sitting on the same side of the House as the right hon. Gentleman, who undertook to advise him; and it was solely by these two or three Gentlemen that the Government were guided. They were cut off from the great bulk of the Irish Members in the House. The result of this state of things, in the case to which he was referring, was that this £50,000 given last year to Ireland had either been wasted or not expended. The second step, therefore, was giving a certain sum to England and Scotland, and pretending to give the same to Ireland, but in reality doing nothing of the kind. What had been given had been frittered away in Dublin. The third step was far more important, and had come in in that portion of the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which dealt with the Local Government Bill. That question became of great importance in the pecuniary relations of the two countries. They had, up to this point, dealt with sums of moderate amount. Under the disturnpiked roads arrangement it would only have come to £40,000; last year the amount given to Ireland came to £50,000; but now they found the amount given to Ireland should be about £500,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the gross sum for England would be £5,800,000, and that he considered Ireland to be entitled to 1-11th of the amount that England was entitled to, from a taxable point of view, so that the amount given to Ireland would be considerably over £500,000. As to what the proportion should be between Ireland and the United Kingdom, he (Colonel Nolan) did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman. The proportion between the two could only be settled by one of two sets of statistics—one he himself had moved for at a time when there was no political question before the House, and which was granted by the Treasury. That Return showed that Ireland paid 1-9th or 1-10th of the whole taxation of the United Kingdom, leaving out—exactly as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had left out to-night—the Post Office receipts from the ordinary taxation. Since that time the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had brought a re-edited edition of the statistics; but that edition was brought out at a peculiar time—namely, at a time when political questions between England and Ireland were to the fore and Party feeling ran high, and though they cut out down the proportion of the United Kingdom, he did not think it was as likely to be correct as the statement given by the Treasury on his (Colonel Nolan's) Motion on the first occasion, when there was no political question touched by the figures. He thought that, under the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to prove to the House on what he grounded his assertion that Ireland was only 1-11th part of the United Kingdom for taxable purposes. He must have been guided either by independent Returns of his own, or by the Returns obtained by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, or the Returns granted upon his (Colonel Nolan's) Motion, which he thought were the truest of the three. Putting that point aside for the present, he should like to know from the right hon. Gentleman exactly what he intended to adopt as the share of Ireland in this Local Government arrangement? The right hon. Gentleman said £127,000.

Mr. GOSCHEN: This coming year.

Colonel NOLAN said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would follow up the opinion he had expressed with regard to the application of this sum better than he had done last year. Last year he had expressed very much the same opinion as that they had heard from him to-night; but he had not followed it out. The right hon. Gentleman had said he hoped the money would go to the county cess. He (Colonel Nolan) trusted the right hon. Gentleman would now put his foot down, and say that the money must go to the county cess. He would much sooner trust the right hon. Gentleman than he would the great majority of the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench on this question, and he would urge the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see that the money was spent in Ireland as it was in England. There would not be the slightest chance of getting justice if the Treasury Bench listened to everybody in Dublin who made representations to them, men who wanted new salaries, and things of that kind, and who got round the Chief Secretary, getting him to adopt fancy schemes. If the money were given in Ireland as it was in England, the Irish people would throw in their lot with the English people, and would take the same chance that the English ratepayers took. Was he to understand that 4*d.* per head for the indoor paupers was to be given besides the £127,000?

MR. GOSCHEN said, that the contribution from the Probate Duty paid that 4*d.* per head, and that that contribution amounted in the case of Ireland to £127,000.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the right hon. Gentleman would own that, though he had spent over three hours in explaining the matter, and although, no doubt, he had done it far better than anyone else would have been able to do it, he had not been able to devote more than eight or 10 minutes to this part of the subject, and therefore it was not to be wondered at that the Irish Members had not grasped the whole meaning of the arrangement, so far as Ireland was concerned. The £127,000, it seemed, was to be the gross amount given to Ireland, and that would be increased at the end of next year by one-third.

MR. GOSCHEN: By one-half.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he maintained that Ireland ought to get about £500,000, seeing that the United Kingdom was to receive £5,800,000. The only way the Chancellor of the Exchequer could get out of that was by a special system of allotting all those taxes which were paid in England, and which were not paid in Ireland, to local rates. That was a clever plan, no doubt, but they must remember that for the past 10 or 20 years Ireland had been very badly treated in this House. The Government had said—"There are certain taxes which are paid in England, but which you do not pay in Ireland;" but all that sort of thing, it must be remembered, now came to an end under this Budget, and Ireland, instead of being treated better, was treated worse than ever. He (Colonel Nolan) recognized the justice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the right hon. Gentleman did not claim generosity—in not considering the difference between the yield of Probate Duty in England and Ireland. But why should the right hon. Gentleman take the Probate Duty? It was a matter of selection—he must either take that duty or some other duty to assist the paupers. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman had acted very wisely; and he had seen, very properly, that he could not affect the relations between England and Ireland. He (Colonel Nolan) had argued this question with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in this House; and, therefore, he might claim that he argued it altogether apart from political feeling. The yield of the Probate Duty in Ire-Ireland was very small compared with its yield in this country; but, relatively speaking, the poorer classes in Ireland were much more heavily taxed than they were in England. He quite acknowledged that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had behaved fairly in not applying the Probate Duty equally, which would have been the most unfair and fallacious test between the two countries which could be devised. On the whole, he recognized the fairness of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals in regard to the Probate Duty; but otherwise he was of opinion that the Budget, in connection with the Local Government Bill, would bear with extreme hardship on Ireland, unless it were reconsidered. The right hon. Gentleman might say—"I have left no inequality of taxation between the two countries—all those taxes which were unequal I have swept away, and I have put them on the local rates in England." That was the utmost the right hon. Gentleman could say for his Budget. He (Colonel Nolan) did not think there was a tax left in England which was not paid in Ireland, except, perhaps, that for armorial bearings, which the people of Ireland were perfectly ready to pay. As to the Cart Tax, he was ready to assent to it, so far as Ireland was concerned, if agricultural carts were omitted—not only the carts used in farm work, but those light carts in which the farmer and his family went to market once a-week. If such carts as those were to be included, the tax would be a most iniquitous one, and would bring about a little revolution in Ireland. Most families in the country districts had small carts, which were used for this purpose; and, whether or not the imposition was right and just, it would prove the most unpopular tax the Government could invent. And the same in regard to horses. If it were merely to be on pleasure horses, or on horses used for professional purposes—driving the solicitor about, and so on—he should not object. As to the additional tax it was proposed to put on champagne and foreign securities, the people of Ireland would not care much about that, as they had very little to do with such things.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I desire to answer several questions which have been put to me; and, in the first place, I will refer to what has fallen from the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan). The hon. and gallant Gentleman seems to think I have fallen short of the ideal standard he would wish to see applied to the two countries; but when he complains that there is only £127,000 applied to Ireland, and that next year it would be only £190,000, I would remind him that I used a phrase which I very carefully selected—namely, that if any further adjustment were necessary between the two countries in consequence of the transfer of licences in England to the Local Authorities, as against the withdrawal of the grants, and if that proceeding left a hole in the Revenue, which would be to the disadvantage of other portions of the United Kingdom, that would be made a matter for adjustment between the two countries. If the effect of the transfer should be to leave Ireland at a disadvantage as compared with England, I should consider it my duty, in the case of Ireland as in the case of Scotland, to make a corresponding adjustment. The hon. and gallant Member speaks of the total sum which is to be given to England as £5,500,000. He must deduct from that the grants she now gets, but will hereafter lose, and only treat the aggregate relief, which is £3,000,000, and not £5,500,000.

Colonel NOLAN said, he had been treating of the subventions which Ireland did not get.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Ireland gets other subventions which England does not get. At any rate, I would invite the hon. and gallant Gentleman to discuss with me the question of the sum paid by England and Ireland. Although, in the case of some special grants, Ireland may not have the same proportion that England and Scotland enjoy, in other directions Ireland is enjoying much larger grants. I think the hon. and gallant Member has done me justice in this matter as regards my intentions; and I will only say that I am anxious to bring about an equitable adjustment between the two countries. When a proper time comes, I shall be perfectly prepared to confer with my hon. and gallant Friend on the subject, because, as I have repeatedly asserted, that I look upon it as extremely important that Ireland should feel that, whatever differences of political opinion may exist, she is treated by this country—her richer sister, with whom I hope she will always remain indissolubly united—with all the consideration which her poorer circumstances deserve. The proportion I have estimated as due to Ireland I have arrived at after careful consideration.

Colonel NOLAN: On what statistics are the proportions made out?

Mr. GOSCHEN: From a Return presented to the House not along ago. I have consulted all the Returns prepared by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), when he wished to adjust the taxation between the countries in connection with his Home Rule scheme, and I have arrived at the best results it was in my power to arrive at. As I say, it is my earnest desire to satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite and their constituents that they are fairly treated in this matter. I will give them every opportunity of examining and criticizing our calculations, and, if necessary, I should be perfectly ready to reconsider them if they wish me to do so. The hon. and gallant Gentleman made some reference to the £50,000 which in my proposal in the Budget of last year was handed over to Ireland. He complained that the money has not been spent in a manner which recommended itself to the Representatives of Ireland. A considerable amount of that was given for arterial drainage, and the pressure put upon the Government for the expenditure from the districts where the money has been spent was both very considerable and very persistent. I do not know whether the hon. and gallant Member remembers that in making my first statement I distinctly intimated that the Government would be prepared to listen to any representations that might come from Ireland on the subject; but the offer was treated with some disdain, and we received no assistance whatever from Ireland as to the expenditure of this money. I trust that in the expenditure of the sum of money which will now be placed at the disposal of Ireland we shall receive such assistance as may enable us to apply these grants, which are given, not in a spirit of generosity but in a spirit of justice, in such a manner as to give the best relief we can to the ratepayers of Ireland. My own personal desire would be that as in England and Scotland we hope every individual ratepayer may feel the advantage of the relief which is given, so in Ireland every ratepayer, whatever district he may be in or whatever class he may belong to, may at the same time feel that some relief has been given to him in the burdens to which as a ratepayer he is liable. I have been asked a great many questions in the course of the discussion, and I must say I regret that I did not give sufficient information to right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and the Committee generally, with regard to the falling off or the increase on particular heads of the Revenue. I have certainly no reason to complain of the tone in which right hon. Gentlemen opposite criticized my statement. They recognized that I felt I had a very long statement to make, and that, therefore, I omitted to dwell to the extent which is usually the case on some of the details of Expenditure. It would, however, be easy to remedy any omission, which, considering the already intolerable length of my statement, was hardly avoidable, and I cheerfully accept the suggestions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) that I should supplement the statement I have made by putting the House into possession of further information at the earliest possible date with regard to particular heads of Expenditure and particular heads of increase or falling off of Revenue. It will be my duty to do that, and I shall carry out their wish at the earliest possible date. Several questions have been asked me with regard to the Wheel Tax and the Carriage Tax, and it may be as well that I should make a few further observations on that part of the question. Those carriages now liable to licence duty will not be liable to the new Wheel Tax. Those which pay the £2 2*s*. or the 15*s*., which I have described, will not be liable to the further tax of 2*s*. 6*d*. per wheel. In the second place, I am asked with regard to cars or waggons which are dragged by locomotives or traction engines, and which in many cases, as has been explained, do very great damage to the roads. They will be treated as waggons, and will have to pay £1 if they should be above the weight of half-a-ton, and they will also be charged the Wheel Tax according to the number of wheels they have. There is a special clause in the Resolution which will be submitted, which says that when drawn by electricity or other means, cars and waggons will be liable to the Wheel Tax. There is one omission I made which is of some consequence, and that is that carts of less weight than 2 cwt. will not be taxed at all. Hon. Members will probably think of costermongers and other poor persons who use small carts of a very light character. We do not wish to impose a tax upon them, especially after having dealt with the hawkers, and therefore we have taken a limit of 2 cwt., below which barrows and light carts will not be taxed.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: How about traction engines?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Traction engines are now liable to a licence.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: Do you add to that?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No, I do not propose to add to that tax; but it will be a legitimate thing, if the Local Authorities think that the tax ought to be added to, to consider the question. At the same time we must recognize that these locomotives do a useful service, and that it would be very unwise to tax them beyond the amount they could fairly bear. There must be fair adjustment between the service they render and the damage they do to the roads. I have been asked a question by the hon. Member for the Osgoldcross Division of Yorkshire (Mr. Austin) as to the collection of Income Tax. The hon. Member alluded to a grievance which some of his constituents felt in having to pay this tax twice over, on account of the default of collectors. Well, I do not wish to overload my Budget Bill with a greater mass of controversial matter than that which it must necessarily contain, but I certainly, in the course of the present Session, hope to introduce again clauses relating to the collection of Income Tax by paid officers of the Inland Revenue, instead of a percentage being allowed as commission to local collectors. That proposal was frustrated last year, partly by want of time and partly by the opposition which was offered to it; but I hope to be able to introduce it again, and to be able to gain the general assent of the House of Commons to my proposal, and against the opposition which will certainly be raised on behalf of the vested interests of a great many people. This is a kind of proposal which brings a great number of Town Clerks up to the Metropolis, who bring influence to bear upon their Members, and sometimes, what I think, a fictitious opposition is, in this way, raised to legitimate proposals which really commend themselves to the general sense of the House. It will be a considerable reform to place the collection of the Income Tax in the hands of officers of the Inland Revenue; but, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton knows, the proposition is one which will evoke a great deal of opposition. I am reminded by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury that it is now in the power of Local Authorities to adopt the system, but it is better that some compulsory method should be adopted by Parliament once for all than that Local Authorities should be left to struggle with it from time to time. Then with regard to the imposition of an annual tax upon foreign securities, an hon. Member asks me whether securities which have paid the duty of 10*s.* will be liable to this tax? No, Sir; such securities will not be liable. Once they have paid the 10*s.* tax, they are supposed to have compounded for the transfer duty for ever. I think that is a very cheap composition. The issue tax is 2*s.* 6*d.*, and for the additional 7*s.* 6*d.* it has been considered that the bonds of any Corporation or State should be free from the toll on passing from hand to hand, and we will not disturb that arrangement. There is only one other question I have left unanswered. We are asked if we will not exempt from licence duty pedlars as well as hawkers? No, Sir; I have not yet come to the conclusion that that tax should be repealed. The case of the hawkers has been specially brought to my notice, and it seems that, having dealt with that, a claim is set up on behalf of another class of persons who consider themselves almost similarly situated. I cannot admit that their claim can be established, but it will be for the House of Commons to consider the matter on a future occasion. I must once more, in conclusion, apologize to the right hon. Gentleman opposite for not having dilated on certain figures; but if I had gone more fully into detail on some points I should have been obliged to trouble the Committee at a length which, notwithstanding their extremely kind indulgence, would have been trespassing too much on their patience.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he could quite sympathize with the natural desire of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, after his wonderful exertion this evening, to bring this informal discussion to a conclusion; but he (Mr. Picton) might be pardoned if he could not allow the discussion to end without uttering a word of dissent. He could join with hon. Members who preceded him in admiration of the lucidity with which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put before them the most complicated proposals—a lucidity which, to his mind, was perfectly wonderful, because it enabled even him, who was puzzled by such things generally, to follow the statement almost throughout with the greatest ease. But however he might admire the faculties which enabled the right hon. Gentleman to set such a statement before the House, he could not but regret their use for such a purpose. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman's proposals looked like a retrograde movement. He set interest against interest, instead of taking a broad view of the welfare of the whole Commonwealth. They had to consider the case of pedlars as against hawkers, of two-wheeled vehicles against four-wheeled vehicles, and the case of various little licences one against the other. He could not help thinking that all these little irritating taxes must necessarily be annoying to the community. They require expenditure on their collection, and they interposed many hindrances in the way of trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was only a short time ago regarded as a rising prophet of the great school of financiers, of which the chief luminary for generations past had been the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). Now, they could not help contrasting the Budget—able as it was—to which they had listened to-night with the Budgets which were produced in 1853, 1860, 1861, up to at any rate 1865. Those Budgets aimed at freeing industry and labour from their burdens, at reducing a number of little irritating imposts on various forms of enterprize, and at throwing the burden of taxation as far as was possible and just upon the accumulated wealth of the country. They did their best to reach that goal, and probably it would have been reached by this time had not the progress of the country been interrupted by disastrous wars, and by various changes owing to Government by Party. The right hon. Gentleman was much mistaken if he supposed that those Budgets were forgotten, or that there were not millions of people in this country who looked forward to the resumption of that line of fiscal policy which was marked out by the financial statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Amongst other things, he could not but regret that the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had found no opportunity of reducing or abolishing taxation on what he (Mr. Picton) must insist had now become the necessaries of life—that was to say, such drinks as tea and coffee and cocoa. Hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Party opposite years ago had maintained that these things had become necessaries of life. He (Mr. Picton) certainly thought that taxation on the necessaries of life was in the highest degree injudicious. However, he was aware that it was scarcely right to endeavour to discuss at any length the principles involved in the Budget which had been just proposed. He had merely wished to say in a very few words that he most emphatically dissented from the general tendency of the proposals which had been made, and that he hoped to have another opportunity of raising the principles to which he referred, when he trusted that the House would allow them to be discussed.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he was glad to have heard the speech to which they had just listened. The hon. Member seemed to be jealous of any taxation which did not press as much as possible on the rich, and which did not keep as far as possible from trade and the working classes. To his (Mr. C. W. Gray's) mind the Budget which had been produced this afternoon was certainly a more favourable Budget to that great branch of trade, agriculture, than any Budget which had been heard of in this House for many years past. He was sure that many an agricultural labourer and many a little village tradesman and shopkeeper when he heard of this Budget would say—"Well, though we will not admit that this is a remedy for agricultural depression, we do give the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer credit for having done what he could under the circumstances." Not very long ago he (Mr. C. W. Gray) had had the pleasure of being at a public meeting in the town which the hon. Member had the honour of representing with his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), who held out to the people of Leicester that it would be a good thing to reduce the tax upon tea; but at the same time it was pointed out that taxes must come from somewhere or other, and that when the tax on tea was reduced, it would be well to make up the loss to the revenue by taxing certain foreign articles of luxury. They heard to-night that champagne was to be taxed. Not only champagne, but silks, satins and laces, which were articles of luxury used by the rich, would bear taxation, and he hoped in time would become a source of revenue, whilst tea and such necessaries would be taxed less and less. To leave these parts of the subject, before he sat down he begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having done what he could under the circumstances. He hoped that some day a great deal more would be effected, but he was sure that the agriculturists would be glad to hear that brewers' drays, millers' waggons, and such like heavy vehicles, which cut up the roads and added so much to the cost of keeping them in repair, were now going to bear some share of that cost. Those of them who were yeomen farmers would be glad to know that they were in future to be treated under Schedule A of the Income Tax in a straightforward way, and that if they were farming, and the farms they were farming did not pay, they would not be called upon to pay Income Tax upon that part of their business.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): You are not a tenant farmer.

Mr. C. W. GRAY said, the hon. Member for East Donegal, who was, no doubt, renowned for his knowledge of nearly every subject touched on in this House—though in this case the exception proved the rule—had told him (Mr. C. W. Gray) that he was not a tenant farmer. That was not the fact. He was a tenant farmer, and he rented just about as many acres as those which he owned.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the point of his remark was that, if the hon. Member came under Schedule A as an owner, he would be exonerated, but not as a tenant farmer.

Mr. C. W. GRAY said, he must explain that hitherto when these persons who were farming their own land—persons who were known in England as yeomen farmers—under the disastrous circumstances which to-day surrounded agriculture, were not able to make any profit from the land, they had not received any relief under Schedule A, but now the Chancellor of the Exchequer said to them—"Provided yours is a *bonâ fide* business, and that you cultivate not merely a model farm or a pleasure farm, you should have relief." He thanked the right hon. Gentleman very much for what he proposed to do.

Mr. MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) congratulated the Government and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the great satisfaction which he believed would be given to the agricultural classes, and to the farmers especially, who were the most suffering class in the country. He believed it would give them satisfaction to see heavy vans taxed, and it would also give them especial satisfaction to see a tax put upon champagne, which was a beverage which in their bad times they had themselves little chance of indulging in. He wished, however, to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to one omission in his speech. Many farmers had been looking forward with great interest to some further statement from Government with regard to the promised subsidy to agricultural and dairy schools. Many farmers were looking forward to the establishment of those schools, but the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing about them. He (Mr. More) wished to get some assurance from the Government that they were still regarding this question with the interest with which the farmers looked upon it. He should like to know whether the fact that the subject had not been mentioned was due to the fact that the Government thought it could be more fittingly dealt with on some future occasion. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had promised them the other night an instalment of £5,000 for the purpose of agricultural dairy schools. The opinion of the agricultural classes was that that amount would not go very far. The proposal as to this grant had been attacked by some writers in the public Press, because it was thought that the establishment of large Government schools would interfere with the undertakings of some professors who had established private schools, but the object those who advocated the grant had in view was to cheapen the education for our small farmers' sons, and not to affect the colleges at all. He (Mr. More) had no wish to trespass on the time of the House, and he only asked for an assurance from the Government that this matter was one to which they intended to devote some attention.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said, he wished to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of those people living in the country who kept horses. He agreed that people in towns who kept horses and carriages kept them for the purpose of luxury, and no doubt they ought to be taxed; but agriculturists were obliged to keep horses, it was a necessary for them. He understood that agricultural horses were to be exempted from the tax, but the right hon. Gentleman should remember that the farmer was obliged to keep other horses—for instance, the nag which took him to market, and on which he rode about the farm. He should like to know whether such horses as those were to be exempted from the tax, for even if the tax were only £1 1*s.* it would be an amount which it would be very hard for a struggling agriculturist to pay in these days. The farmer was the very man who paid the rates in the country—who was already overcharged—for the maintenance of the roads, and he was the very man who ought to be exempted from the horse tax. An hon. Gentleman opposite had referred to the taxing of tenants under Schedule A, and he (Mr. Jeffreys) thought the hon. Gentleman did not quite understand that Schedule A was the landlord's tax and Schedule B the tenant's tax. Men who farmed their own land, as he (Mr. Jeffreys) and as his hon. Friend the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. C. W. Gray) did, had to pay two taxes. They first of all had to pay the landlord's tax under Schedule A, and then they had to pay the tenant's tax under Schedule B. That had been found a great hardship, and it was only right that it should be cut off. A man had often been obliged to pay upon a supposed income, when in these times he may not have earned anything. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the relief he had given to the agriculturists, and trusted he would extend this relief by exempting all *bonâ fide* agriculturists from the payment of this horse tax.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he heartily joined in the feeling which had been expressed in all parts of the House of admiration of the lucid manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made his statement this evening. He did not propose for a moment to criticize the right hon. Gentleman's statement, which required very careful consideration; but there were two points on which he wished for some further information. In the earlier part of his speech the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the great increase which had taken place in local taxation during the last 10 years, and he justified on that ground the very great change which he proposed to make in taxation. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman was well aware that the increase had not occurred altogether in purely rural districts, and he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was afraid in saying this that his remarks would not perhaps altogether meet with the approbation of hon. Members opposite. A great deal of the increase had arisen in the Metropolis and the urban districts. In the Report signed by the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) it was set forth that 67 per cent of the increase had occurred in the Metropolis, while 59 per cent had occurred in urban districts, and only 12 per cent in the rural districts. He did not raise any question as to whether or not this increase of 12 per cent in the rural districts was not an important increase, but he wanted to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Metropolis and urban districts whose taxation had been so enormously increased were to get their full and fair share of the proposed relief. The other point he wished to call attention to was with reference to the adjustment which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to make between the two great classes of property in bearing the burden of Imperial taxation—real and personal property. If he understood the right hon. Gentleman aright, he said that the time had arrived when the two questions ought to be dealt with together. The owners of real property were not confined to the squirearchy—there were the owners of houses in boroughs to be considered. There was house property in towns, and the burden upon owners of real property so situated was quite as great as in the rural districts. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that while he was adjusting the inequalities on the one side he was ready to adjust them on the other. He did not understand how the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to deal with Succession Duty. If he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was correct, personal property paid, with one exception, two taxes upon death, the Probate Duty and the Legacy Duty. When a property was bequeathed from a father to a child there was no Legacy Duty payable. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) when he altered the Probate Duty from 2½ to 3 per cent, raised the half per cent for covering that case, so that in a case where personal property was bequeathed to a child it paid one duty, the 3 per cent duty, and that was all. But where the property was bequeathed to a collateral, such as a brother or a sister, or other collateral relative, or a stranger, there were two duties to be paid, first the Probate Duty and then the Legacy Duty. He remembered when the case was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Mid Lothian the right hon. Gentleman gave them as the Report of the Inland Revenue officials that in 7-12ths of the cases the property descended from father to child, and in 5-12ths to others—to collaterals or strangers. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) understood, proposed simply to deal with the Succession Duty, which was equivalent to the Legacy Duty and not to Probate Duty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) raised the point and said that the whole question would have to be considered with regard to the incidence of these two forms of taxation, one being on the *corpus* and the other on the life interest. The right hon. Gentleman will, therefore, probably throw some further light on the subject.

Mr. S. HOARE (Norwich): I trust it will be in the power of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to hold out some hope that in the case of horses engaged on farms perhaps not entirely in agricultural work, there will be no licence. But I go further, and express the hope that since the Government have been offering inducements for the breeding of horses, that in the case of horses used for breeding throughout the country there will be some relief to those engaged in breeding horses, and that, at any rate, duty will not be placed upon the horses until they arrive at a certain age. I think this is a tax which will tell hardly on some agricultural districts, and I shall be glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer can consider the case. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) has spoken of this as a retrograde Budget; but I should think it is one of the most progressive Budgets ever brought into this House. For the first time it is proposed that personal and real property shall be amalgamated to reduce the burden of the country, and I cannot but consider that this is a great step, and one which will make a great difference to the poorer portion of the community. It may be that they wish to see the duty on tobacco reduced, as was done last year, but I cannot understand how the hon. Member can suppose that the Budget is one which affects poor people unfairly. It seems to me that all the various duties which have been increased will fall almost entirely upon another class; even if we enter on that part of it which is connected with the Local Government question, we shall find that it falls principally upon the keepers of horses and the users of wheels, and we find that the methods by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets the means of reducing the Income Tax is distinctly connected with the wealthier classes of the country. I am very glad that the duty on contract notes is to be 6*d.* instead of 1*d.*, and I believe this will also be the feeling of the London Stock Exchange, because there are many people who will be affected that under assumed names get people to engage in doubtful operations; and I believe if the stamp were made heavier the proposal would not meet with much opposition. I am afraid that the tax on American Railway Securities will be found to present some difficulties with regard to its collection, but, at the same time, I think it is a fair and right tax; at any rate it does not affect the poor people of the country, none of whom probably hold foreign securities. I was glad to hear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer realized that in many cases it was found that the Stamp Duties were evaded, and I am certain there are other cases than he has dealt with where the Government ought to receive more money than they do from stamps. At the same time I should be sorry that the temporary transactions of men of business should be in any way interfered with by a straining of the law. Then it cannot be said that the tax on bottled wines affects the working classes, and so far, therefore, from this being a retrograde Budget it is—and I believe the people of the country will so consider it—very much the contrary. At any rate, if they are not satisfied with what is in the future, they will be entirely satisfied with the past, when they see the grand surplus which the right hon. Gentleman has been able to put before the House. I think they will take courage when they see that there are no supplemental charges for the Army and Navy, and have confidence in the financial administration of the country at the present time.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) I think we may fairly congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the fact that we have got free from those little wars which have prevented our having a surplus for many years past; and I also wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his looking to the taxation of realized property rather than to the earnings of the people. I am bound to say that I do not wholly agree with the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) in saying that the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman is open to objection from the point of view of the poorer classes of the people. As regards the taxation on horses and carts, I am inclined to agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But I rise principally to say that I looked with great interest on the long-promised cessation of the Imperial subventions in aid of local taxation. It does not, however, seem to me that there is any real cessation of subventions for local purposes; the change appears to be only nominal; when we are told that certain taxes are to be made over to the Local Authorities, the change seems to be only one of account, though there might be a change in the manner of distribution. Again, it seems to me that the old hereditary burdens on land have been to a great degree shuffled off while new burdens have been imposed. There is one point on which I desire some information. I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he proposes to buy up and put an end to the capital value of the Suez Canal shares in order that the profits may be unencumbered. I do not understand how it is proposed to raise the money with which to buy up these shares, and the right hon. Gentleman will, perhaps, give the Committee some further information on this point.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that he is prepared for a bombardment on many subjects dealt with in his speech. I shall address myself to one point alone, and can assure the right hon. Gentleman that this is only a preliminary bombardment. The right hon. Gentleman said he proposed to reimpose or rather increase the duty formerly paid on race horses. If my right hon. Friend thinks it right or necessary to reimpose the duty which the greatest of Conservative leaders repealed since I have been a Member of this House, I have nothing to say further than that the tax of £5 per head will be paid without a murmur. But allow me to say that this tax will not produce a very large amount of revenue, because my own recollections remind me that in former days there were probably not more than 1,500 or 2,000 horses engaged in racing, and, therefore, I think the revenue which the right hon. Gentleman expects to derive from this source must be regarded as a doubtful factor in this calculation. The right hon. Gentleman told us in a marked manner that brood mares and foals would be exempted from this taxation, and I wish to ask him whether stallions are to be included in this exemption, because, if not, I can conceive nothing more inconsistent than my right hon. Friend's proposal. It is only two months ago that the right hon. Gentleman — with a generosity and liberality that I hardly anticipated from him—came forward with a proposal to appoint a Royal Commission, and consented to the expenditure of £5,000 a-year for the encouragement of horse-breeding in this country. That Commission was appointed, and I have had the honour of being a member of it; we have devoted some attention to the subject—I hope not altogether with bad results — and we have submitted proposals, some of which have been carried out. If my right hon. Friend is not going to exempt stallions, I ask what is the definition he is going to place on "pleasure horses?" Are they riding and driving horses? I imagine that he means that all horses used for the purpose of riding or driving and which are not used in trade are those which he describes as pleasure horses. But what does that involve? Is a horse on which a farmer rides round his farm to be considered a pleasure horse, and as such to be liable to the tax? I would point out that the horse which a farmer uses to ride round his farm is frequently a clever four or five year old, which he either proposes to sell or use for hunting. Is it the horse he drives to market? Because, if so, it is often a horse that he proposes to sell at a high price, for harness, especially if he is bred in Norfolk, and got by a Norfolk trotter. I want to put this in all earnestness before my right hon. Friend. All the pleasure horses in this country are bred by the agriculturists and farmers of Great

Britain and Ireland—and of Ireland, perhaps, more than England. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] Certainly the best horses I ever rode came from Ireland. An hon. Member says "No," but I can assure him that Ireland is celebrated, perhaps, for its horses more than anything else. If the right hon. Gentleman is going to impose £1 a-head on all pleasure horses in the country, he will be inflicting an injury on the farmers and breeders of Great Britain and Ireland, and interfering with the breeding of horses in the future, and he will, moreover, counteract the good effect which we expect to derive from his liberality of two months ago. I was amazed at hearing a Member of Her Majesty's Government making this proposal, and I was surprised at what seemed to me to be the lack of knowledge on the subject. But, when I looked along the Treasury Bench from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the First Lord of the Treasury and the row of Ministers who are sitting there to-night, I came to the conclusion that there was not a single man amongst them who knew a horse from a cow. I hope, therefore, I shall be excused for calling attention to this subject on the present occasion; but I give the right hon. Gentleman the most friendly warning and intimation that if this proposal is persevered in, it will meet with certain opposition from this Bench.

MR. GOSCHEN: I think I may now proceed to deal with some of the questions which have been addressed to me by hon. Members, and I will commence with the question of my right hon. Friend the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). It will be, I think, an interesting sight, when my right hon. Friend commences to bombard, not me, for the Exchequer is not concerned in this, but to bombard the Representatives of the ratepayers with regard to the tax on horses. I have pointed out that this tax will not affect the Imperial Revenue, but the mass of the ratepayers of the country and their Representatives will have to fight out the question, whether stallions are to be included in the exemption, with my right hon. Friend. I shall watch, with interest not untinged with a certain amount of amusement, the battle that will be waged over the question whether it is better to pay higher rates or place a duty on horses. The right hon. Gentleman has pointed out the difficulty in deciding exactly what is and what is not a pleasure horse. There is one way in which the difficulty can be avoided and that is by making the tax one of 10*s.* on every horse as it used to be, instead of £1 on each pleasure horse as is now proposed. Does my right hon. Friend prefer that every horse should be taxed? [Mr. CHAPLIN: No.] Where then is the anxiety for the reduction of rates of which we have so often heard? We wish to relieve the burdens of those who have no horses and make those who have contribute to the general relief; but if the hon. Gentleman prefers to continue to pay a higher highway rate and have no tax on horses, the difficulty will be not between my right hon Friend and myself, but between him and the advocates of the reduction of rates. I can assure him, although he says there is no one on this Bench who understands the difference between a horse and a cow, that there is the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) who is, perhaps, competent to speak on these matters, I will not say as the representative of the Jockey Club, but as representing the genial common sense of the country squire. We have had the opportunity of consulting with him and a certain number of gentlemen representing country interests who have taken a view of this matter different from that of my right hon. Friend. With regard to the tax of £5 on race-horses, I think that horses like Hermit can very well bear the tax, and as to the tax on stallions which has so greatly excited my right hon. Friend, I cannot conceive, looking to the great value of those interesting animals, that a duty of £1 a-year is likely to diminish to the smallest extent either their usefulness or their patriotic endeavours, or in the slightest degree to conflict with the desire to promote an improved breed of horses in the country. The tax is, no doubt, heavy on those who, like many country doctors and clergymen, keep a single horse, and I regret this more in their case than in the case of those who keep a larger number of horses. I believe what you may call the breeding horse will be able to bear the tax. At the same time it is for my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin), as I have said, to fight the matter out with the ratepayers and convince them it is better not to impose this tax, and to leave the rates so much higher in consequence of its non-imposition. I have been asked several questions with regard to other matters connected with horses. I presume there will be exemption in favour of the horses which are connected with the Military Services, including the Volunteer Service; that no horses which are legitimately and avowedly kept for the purpose of the Public Service will fall under the tax. But it is a matter which will require examination. All these matters will have to be most carefully considered, and I shall with pleasure hand over the discussion of this subject to my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), who is far more interested in the maintenance of this tax than the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has had the misfortune to propose the tax and to incur the displeasure of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin), while he is not to derive a single penny'sadvantage from the taxation of racehorses or any other horses. [An hon. MEMBER: There are the farmers' horses.] The horses engaged in trade and husbandry will be exempt from the tax. The interesting animal of which we have heard so much to-night—namely, the farmer's cob, which does a certain amount of work, but which is sometimes used for purposes of amusement, offers some difficulties, and the case is undoubtedly one for consideration. But I trust that the Committee may find it possible to retain the duty of £1 upon all horses which, speaking broadly and from a common-sense point of view, may be described as the horses belonging to well-to-do people. I trust the Committee will rather retain the duty of £1 upon such horses than force us to the alternative, the old alternative of imposing a tax of 10*s.* 6*d.* upon every horse. The Committee will with its wisdom and the assistance of the representatives of all the horse breeding, horse racing and other horse interests, be able to arrive at a competent conclusion in the matter. Of course, cab horses and 'bus horses will come within the category of trade horses. My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) dwelt upon a far drier subject than that of the breeding of horses, namely —the question of the allocation of the licence duties. I agree with him that it is expedient that the Local Authorities should have as much power as possible in the collecting and in the administering of the licences. My hon. Friend omitted to notice that, in the first instance, we hand over as a trial to these new authorities the administration of public house licences, and, I think, the new authorities will find their hands pretty well full during their first year of office with the innumerable difficulties that arise with regard to this class of licences.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: The proposal will not pass.

MR. GOSCHEN: My hon. Friend says the proposal will not pass. I feel certain that the proposal to transfer licences to the Local Authorities will be adopted, and that both sides of the House will agree that licensing should not remain in the hands of a judicial body, such as the Quarter Sessions will be in the future, but should be transferred to the administrative body, which will be the new Councils elected by the voice of the people. We have every confidence we shall be able to carry the proposal to transfer licensing to the new authorities. But my hon. Friend will see that the Bill which he will be able to obtain to-night, and which, with his enormous industry, he will have mastered before to-morrow morning, provides that in the case of all licences the localities may ultimately undertake the collection. We have proceeded upon the principle that in the earlier stages of their existence it would be wise not to overload these new Councils. They will have their hands quite full enough during their first years of office with the duties which have been specially confided to their care; but as years roll on we trust that these County Authorities may take in hand the collection of other licences besides public-house licences. Of course, we cannot allow them to raise or reduce general licences, because otherwise you might have some poor county, some small county, setting up a system of cheap licensing, which would attract people from all parts of the country to buy their licences in that particular county to the disadvantage of other counties. We cannot, therefore, allow any variation of the rates, but we will encourage to the utmost Local Authorities to take into their hands the whole of the finances of their district. It is quite possible the result may be, that the money is not collected so cheaply as it is now by the Central Authorities. It is impossible to exaggerate the enormous number of questions which have grown up round all these licences—questions of law, questions of practice, questions of exemption, with which the Inland Revenue are now perfectly familiar, and with which the new authorities will gradually have to make themselves acquainted. But I am personally so strongly impressed with the advisability and expediency of large duties and responsibilities being imposed on the Local Authorities, that I should be glad, even if the expense should be somewhat increased, that the powers of these new County Councils should be, from year to year, more and more developed, and that these bodies should relieve the central administration of that over work which we all deplore. I am, therefore, agreed with my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) that we should do our utmost in every way to make the transfer of the collection of revenue a real change, enlisting the whole sympathies of the country on behalf of the revenue which will go to the counties, exemptions which are now pleaded for on insufficient grounds will then cease, evasions which are now winked at will then be punished. I trust I have satisfied my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) so far as intention goes, at all events. We wish to make this a real and not a nominal transfer, though, in the first instance, we may have to proceed with caution. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) considered this a retrograde Budget. He alluded to the great Budgets of 1853 and 1860. I entirely agree with him it is impossible to equal the great financial achievements of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in those years. I entirely agree with him it is impossible to exaggerate the advantage which the right hon. Gentleman conferred upon the State upon those occasions; but there is another consideration which has been forced upon my mind since the time I have been responsible for the National finances, and even before that time, to which I will call the special attention of this Committee and the public. We have been proceeding in the direction of simplicity. We have removed an enormous number of taxes; we have enabled the revenue to be collected more cheaply, perhaps, than the revenue is collected in any other country, because it is concentrated upon a few and great and striking items. But, at the same time, we are resting the whole finance of the country upon a rather narrow basis. We have been looking to some five or six great sources of revenue, and if any of them should break in our hands, we are imperilling the equilibrium of our finance. Now, when I say this, I trust that I shall not be thought to be detracting in the slightest degree from the great achievements of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian; but what is the position of this country as regards taxation? We see that £27,000,000 sterling, an amount more than sufficient to pay the charge on the National Debt, is raised from one source of revenue alone—namely, drink, which is a declining source. Is that not a warning to us that we must not simplify too much, and that we must not rest too much upon a few single items? It is from that point of view that I look upon it as so important to keep in reserve that great engine which we have at our disposal, the Income Tax. I hope I have made it clear, though I may not have convinced the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) that the Imperial policy dictates that we should retain this important engine for emergency, that in times of comparative ease we should seek somewhat to broaden the revenue, so that when the emergency comes we may have in reserve additional resources which we may turn on at any moment, thus greatly strengthening the credit of the country, and greatly strengthening our position in time of peril. I do not complain of the tone of the hon. Member (Mr. Picton), but I say we must not carry simplicity too far, and I should be averse to parting with a single important item of revenue, but we may diminish, and I trust the time may come when we shall be able to diminish, the amount of some of the taxes which rest upon some articles of consumption, without parting with the taxes themselves. The duty on tobacco is very high, indeed, compared with the value of the article. But, nevertheless, we can only deal with the few great articles of consumption which are still taxed, when we are in a position to approach the question in a broad spirit. It is not desirable to disturb them from year to year, and I, therefore, consider what I have said a good defence for not having touched any of these most important sources of revenue to which the hon. Member (Mr. Picton) alluded. It would be gratifying to be able to reduce the taxation upon these articles, but we must look to the taxation of the country as a whole, and we must not, without great thought, give up any of our great sources of revenue. I have still to deal with the remarks which were made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler.) He challenged me, with perfect fairness, upon two points. He challenged me with regard to the incidence of local taxation as between town and country, and he challenged me with regard to the Succession Duty. Dealing with the first point, I fully admit that the boroughs, especially where there is a large population of indoor poor, have as strong claims upon us as the country districts have. I admit that a large portion of the relief which is given ought to be given to the boroughs, and it is given to the boroughs. The criticism I have seen made upon our plan is that the assistance given to the boroughs is larger than it ought to be in proportion to the relief we give to the counties. The right hon. Gentleman says that the rates have increased far more in boroughs than they have in the country districts. So they have, but then I ask the right hon. Gentleman, have the boroughs not got more in return for their increased rating than the country districts have got for their money? There are the sanitary rates, there are the rates which have gone to beautify the towns, which have established free libraries, which have added to the amenities and pleasures of the working classes in the great centres of industry. I am glad from many points of view that boroughs have increased their rates, because the rates are remunerative in a different sense to the rates imposed in country districts; and the boroughs may fairly claim that personal property should contribute towards all the great social reforms which we rejoice to see in so many of our cities, because why should such reforms be carried out at the expense of one class of contributors only? It is perfectly right that the possessors of realized personalty should contribute to the rates which have been imposed, and which have, I trust, conferred great benefits upon a large portion of the community. But then it must be remembered that there is no town which has heavy rates imposed upon it that will not be benefited by the relief we are affording, just as we trust that there is no corner of the agricultural districts that will not feel that, by one means or another, we have been able in this year to remove a portion of that intolerable burden which has been increasing on their shoulders for so many years. The right hon. Gentleman says that the increased burden has not been so great upon country districts as upon towns; but I appeal to him whether the increased burden must not be felt more by the depressed industry of the agricultural portion of the community than it is felt by those thriving centres of industry which have been able to do so much for their inhabitants by means of their increased rates. It is far more difficult for the agricultural community, in view of the fall in prices, in view of the depression of agriculture, which we all deplore—it is far more difficult for them to bear an increase, even if it be a smaller increase in rates, than it is for other portions of the country. So I trust the right hon. Gentleman, while I hope he will take it from me there is no borough that will not be benefited by the proposals we make, will not grudge to the suffering agricultural communities the relief which we hope will also flow to them from the proposals which we have had the honour to submit. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to another point, on which, I admit, I did not give sufficient explanation—I mean the position of the Succession Duty and the Probate Duty. I dealt too exclusively with lineals, and I did not speak enough of the position of collaterals. I think the right hon. Gentleman entirely appreciates the first part of our proposal, which is this, that the Probate Duty for Imperial purposes is positively reduced to 1½ per cent, the other 1½ per cent going in relief of local burdens. It is admitted that personal property does not contribute enough to these local burdens; and, therefore, I put it to the Committee in this way. We remit 1½ per cent of the Probate Duty from Imperial purposes, and we add so much to the Succession Duty as will equal that amount of Probate Duty which is retained for Imperial purposes. The Imperial Probate Duty will be 1½ per cent. Succession Duty will be raised by ½ per cent. in the case of lineals, and 1½ in that of collaterals, and it will stand exactly on the same footing as the Probate Duty and the Legacy Duty after the Probate Duty has been reduced by 1½ per cent. A nephew inheriting personal property will pay 3 per cent Legacy Duty and 1½ per cent Probate Duty—4½ per cent, and a nephew inheriting Real Property will pay 4½ per cent Sucession Duty. We have levelled down in this sense that personal property is to contribute less to Imperial taxation and more to local taxation; and, on the other hand, we have levelled up, because we say that real property is to contribute somewhat more to Imperial taxation while receiving relief in respect to local taxation. And now I think I have dealt with all the questions that have been addressed to me. I am deeply grateful to the Committee for the manner in which they have generally received the Budget, and to my political opponents for the extremely courteous manner in which they have expressed themselves towards me. I acknowledge that our proposals will have to be examined with the greatest care. I acknowledge that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are entitled to consider not only the coming year, but the year after next, and to press us, as they have, as to the means by which the deficit is to be met. On the other hand, I ask that we may be judged with indulgence. We have difficulties imposed upon us by reason of having to deal with the relief of local taxation, not in this year only, but for future years. That we shall be able to meet right hon. Gentlemen opposite I trust. We will endeavour to meet them in the same spirit in which they have treated us this evening; in a spirit, not of violent political controversy, but of anxiety to secure that the great changes we are making in the relations between local and Imperial taxation may be carried out equitably to all the interests involved. I trust that these changes may be effected without evoking any violent political differences. Both sides of the House are equally pledged and equally interested in endeavouring to do justice between the two great classes who contribute to Imperial and local burdens—the ratepayers on the one hand, and the taxpayers on the other hand.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I need not say how thoroughly I am inclined to join in the expression of congratulation to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the lucidity and the interesting character of the Statement he has laid before the Committee. That which interested me most in his Statement was the account the right hon. Gentleman was able to give of his stewardship during the year which has passed. He was able to show not only a larger sum in the shape of Revenue than he had looked forward to, but he was able to show that the Votes passed by Parliament for the Army and Navy Services had not been exceeded. I attribute that entirely to the watchfulness and the good husbandry of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, fortified, as he was beforehand, by the efforts in favour of economy made by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). But I think the credit which he attempted to give to the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) and to the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) was scarcely merited. The House will remember that no less a sum than something over £30,000,000 sterling is, in time of profound peace, voted for the Army and Navy Services, and that within a very short period of time when a Vote of Credit of many millions was granted by this House for those two Services. One thing disappointed me very much in the Statement, and that was, that when aid was given to local taxation for local purposes, that aid was drawn entirely from personalty and not from realty. The right hon. Gentleman has appropriated one-half of the Probate Duty in aid of local resources; but there are many forms of property throughout the country which at present bring in immense incomes to the owners, but which contribute nothing to the local resources There are such things as ground rents. They would have been a much better source from which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might draw his aid for local resources than the Probate Duty. As in manufacturing centres, and in large centres of population, so in the country districts where mining is carried on, you have immense incomes drawn from the mines of the country in the shape of royalties and way-leave rents which now contribute not one single penny to the local resources. Let me take the case of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the single county of Durham. They draw £130,000 a-year in the shape of royalties from the coal mines in Durham, and they are able also to charge some £37,000 a-year on account of way-leave rents. How much did these Ecclesiastical Commissioners contribute to the local expenditure in Durham? Nothing, or next to nothing. Now I say, that ground rents and royalties and way-leave rents and charges of that kind may be fairly taxed for local purposes. The right hon. Gentleman deplored the narrow basis upon which the present financial system rests. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman broaden the basis of his financial system until the natural foundation—that is, the land of the country—is that upon which it rests? He, of all Chancellors of the Exchequer, should do so. There was a lawgiver of some 4,000 years ago who provided a financial system of the simplest kind. He did not trouble himself about taxes on coffee or dry goods, or this or that article; he initiated a simple system of taxation of the land, drawing contributions from every portion of the soil, from occupier and owner. If the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to adjust his Budget to the exemplar of his countryman and predecessor, he then might claim that he was broadening the basis of the taxation of the country. But the right hon. Gentleman appears to be suffering under that restraint that affects all Finance Ministers of his Party. Throughout the Budget it could be seen plainly enough how difficult it was for a Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Conservative Party to throw anything in the shape of additional burden on owners of land. Occupiers of land they themselves owned, when they adopt farming operations and are unable to make them pay, are discharged from liability under which they now rest under Schedule A. But, then, take the case of farmers under Schedule B—not the owner but the tenant. If his farming is unsuccessful, the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not propose to discharge him from his liability as he proposes to discharge the owner under Schedule A. The right hon. Gentleman said it was open to a farmer to go under the Schedule and present his statement of account——

MR. GOSCHEN: It is practically the same with the owner; he would have to prove that he has made no profit.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Then, why not use the same language? It seemed to me that it was an extraordinary thing to make the difference between owner and occupier, and not a single word was said until that moment as to the necessity of owners furnishing accounts of their transactions. Then, again, when we come to Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman says he does not propose to extend the Carriage Tax to Ireland; but we have not the least objection to that extension. Those who in Ireland drive in carriages belong to a very small and favoured class. Some days ago the right hon. Gentleman said it did not pay the Exchequer to collect the Carriage Tax in Ireland; so now the Carriage Tax is not to be imposed on Ireland, though it is utilized in England, but the wheels of the farmers' carts are to pay a tax of 2*s.* 6*d.* apiece. Thus, you find the industrial classes are charged——

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member is under some misapprehension. I do not propose to extend the Wheel Tax or the Horse Tax to Ireland. I have not communicated with my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland on this subject, and am not informed; but if there is a general wish that the Carriage Tax, the Horse Tax, and Wheel Tax should be introduced in Ireland, I should consider it a most fair measure.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I am glad to have elicited that fact, for we gathered from the right hon. Gentleman's speech that the Carriage Tax was not to be extended to Ireland, but the Horse and Wheel Taxes were. Well, what we now hear is satisfactory. Then as regards the Succession Duties, the right hon. Gentleman within the last few minutes emphasized his observations in regard to these duties, and shows that in the case of collaterals a further rate will be levied to that levied in the past, so that there will be an approximation to equalization between real property and personalty; but he did not meet the point that was raised from the Front Opposition Bench, that Succession Duty is not paid on the corpus but on the life interest, and so tender is he towards realty on this occasion, that he enacts that the duty shall be paid not in four years, but in eight years. He did not give us to understand that any longer term would be allowed for the Probate Duty than exists already, and I fail to see why this exceptional tenderness is shown in the Succession Duty. Then with regard to the distribution locally of the relief to be given from the Imperial Exchequer, I failed to gather the reason why the amount of local resources spent on indoor relief should be the standard of distribution. See how unequally it will work. In parishes like Kensington and Chelsea, a much larger sum is spent on indoor than on outdoor relief, because the workhouse test is mercilessly applied in those places, and they will, by the very harshness of their administration of the Poor Law, secure a very large haul in the amount of aid to be given from the Imperial Exchequer. But let us go Westward, to Merionethshire, to Devon, to Gloucester, and you may find few cases of indoor relief, a proportion of one to every six, seven, or, in some cases, 10, to every case of outdoor relief. It is in these places that the Poor Law is really most depended upon by the agricultural and industrial working population for relief in their old age, or in times of distress, and these are the places where the smallest share of relief will be enjoyed from this Imperial contribution. On another point, I think, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has missed a great opportunity. He has a surplus of over £2,000,000 of money, and he has a number of small taxes raised upon coffee, raisins, figs, and dried fruits, generally articles which, by reason of these taxes, have shown a wonderful want of development, and no increase at all in consumption. If the right hon. Gentleman will take the trouble to look through the Trade Returns he will find that of some 15 or 18 articles that were taxed in 1853, every single one has increased in consumption to a surprising extent, except those half-dozen or so upon which the tax is still retained, such as coffee, chicory, and dried fruits. The amount of revenue realized upon these is comparatively insignificant, but the relief from the abolition of the duty would be very sensible. The right hon. Gentleman might have been able to boast that he had established a free breakfast table at last; he had the opportunity, and I am sorry, both on the merits of the case and for his own reputation, that he allowed the opportunity to slip. It is now reserved, I suppose, for some Liberal statesman to deal with. From observations already made, the right hon. Gentleman will gather it is scarcely a satisfactory proposal that the amount of assistance to be derived from the Imperial Exchequer for local taxation in Ireland should be vested in the hands of the Chief Secretary.

Mr. GOSCHEN: In the absence of data to go upon, I have not marked out the proposals as regards Ireland.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: We have no inkling of the principle of distribution. Evidently, that of indoor relief will not do as a proper standard; and one thing I have been unable to gather, and that is if there is any assurance that the amount of local taxation to be bestowed will equal the amount we lose by the withholding of the grants. If he will work out the figures he has failed to give us, it will be a satisfaction; but it does seem to me very seriously open to doubt whether the grants to be withheld will be equalled by the amount of local assistance we shall get.

Mr. GOSCHEN: No grants will be withheld from Ireland. Ireland will continue to receive the grants she has received hitherto, and she will, in addition, be entitled to the relief I have stated. But, as I have said more than once, I have not sufficient information in regard to Ireland and Scotland. I will make it my business to work out these points, and I will make a future statement to the House with regard to these two countries. I now wish the Committee to allow me to withdraw the Resolution with regard to the Tea Duty, so that hon. Gentlemen may discuss the general Resolutions on a future occasion. I hope, however, the Committee will allow me to take the Resolution in reference to the duty on wines, which it is urgent to take, for otherwise large transactions will take place without the increased duty.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

2. *Resolved,* That in addition to the Duties of Customs now payable on Wine, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	s.	*d.*
If in imperial pint bottles or bottles of less capacity.. ..	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles a proportionate increase of Duty according to capacity.		

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again upon *Thursday* 5th April.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[Bill 165.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title).

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, his right hon. Friend on Thursday, when the second reading of the Bill was called, stated that he would not take the Committee stage until after Easter. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) was not present in the House when the second reading was taken on Friday. Still, he did not object to the present stage, though it was inconvenient to have it taken unexpectedly, as it prevented him placing the terms of his Amendment on the Paper. In this 1st clause he discovered that very objectionable word, in relation to old buildings, "restoration." Now, he understood, from what he heard in the report made to him of his right hon. Friend's observations on Friday, that he assured the House that no money would be expended except on repairs—that was to say, that the Dean and Chapter would not be allowed to indulge their fancies in such ornamentation as their taste might suggest.

The CHAIRMAN: The 1st clause is simply the title of the Act. I think the right hon. Gentleman's observations relate to a subsequent clause.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: It is in the 1st clause that the word restoration occurs.

The CHAIRMAN: The 1st clause runs thus:—"This Act may be recited as 'The Westminster Abbey Act, 1888.'"

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Transfer of property of Westminster, Chapter to Ecclesiastical Commissioners).

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he had to propose an Amendment to this clause. The clause provided that schemes were to be ratified by Her Majesty's Order in Council, and then followed the sub-section relating to the principle of the clause. His Amendment was to insert, at the end of Subsection (6), the words—

"Provided that no such scheme shall be submitted to Her Majesty in Council until it has lain before both Houses of Parliament for the space of two calendar months."

Mr. PICTON (Leicester), as a matter of Order, asked would not this prevent any Member making remarks upon previous sub-sections?

The CHAIRMAN: It will prevent amendment; it will not prevent observation on the clause when moved.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK proceeded. The words of his Amendment were taken from the Union of Benefices Act. When that Act was before the House, many years ago, this Proviso was inserted, and it had been found to be of the greatest possible benefit. It prevented the Bishop of London and others carrying out what were alleged to be improvements, but which were really no improvements at all, without the consent of the House. For a like public advantage he, in accordance with precedent, proposed this Amendment, so that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should not have the power of passing small Acts without the public having any knowledge or voice in the matter. He was bound to say the Bill seemed carelessly drawn, and not very intelligible in all its parts. This was a matter of very great importance, not only as regarded Westminster Abbey itself, but as establishing a precedent that might be followed in several other similar buildings. His right hon. Friend would do well to admit this Amendment, founded, as it was, on a good precedent.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 22, to add—"Provided that no such scheme shall be submitted to Her Majesty in Council until it has lain before both Houses of Parliament for the space of two calendar months."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, his right hon. Friend was under some misapprehension when he said an undertaking was given that the Committee would not be taken until after Easter. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) was scrupulous about observing any undertaking of the kind; but he could assure his right hon. Friend that in this case nothing of the kind was given. The proposal in the Amendment would have the effect of impeding the arrangements for the early application of money necessary for the preservation of the Abbey, and lead, in fact, to the decay of the Abbey—a matter of national importance. The clause provided that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should frame a scheme and provide for the expense out of some estates of the Abbey which were to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and he did not think the House of Commons would be possessed of that information to enable it to judge of the value or advantage of such a scheme. No object, indeed, would be gained. Nothing whatever in the clause referred to the mode in which the money was to be applied; it would not touch the scheme, which was simply a monetary, he might almost say a commercial, transaction. He therefore hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press an Amendment that, under the circumstances, the Government felt bound to resist.

MR. PICTON said, the clause, whether amended or not, contained the very essence of the Bill, and therefore he might be permitted to say why, personally adverse, as he was, to the present connection of Church and State, he nevertheless felt that the Bill was necessary and the clause a wise one. The clause recognized the fact that the great Abbey of Westminster was of interest to the whole nation, a national possession; in fact, it transferred property to certain Royal Commissioners in order that they might use the money derived from this property for the purpose, in the first place, of keeping the fabric in repair; next, paying the Dean and Chapter a proper income; and, finally, providing for the services. That he took to be a recognition that the Church was a national possession. It was a possession of which all Englishmen were proud. Whatever might be the differences of opinion on the connection between Church and State, none, he felt sure, would like to see the venerable building falling into disrepair from neglect.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he would like to ask what security there was that the money which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would provide from the mortgage of the Abbey estates would be wisely expended? Was there any reference to any competent authority, such as the Board of Works, or any responsible architect, to advise and control expenditure, for might it not lead to wasteful patching and jobbing, because admirable ecclesiastics might know nothing of stones and mortar and building repairs?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, provision was made for the supervision of the responsible architect of the Ecclesiastical Commission, Mr. Ewan Christian. He would supervise all the work.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing, though he felt bound to say his right hon. Friend had not made out a good case against the Amendment, having regard to the precedent of the Union of Benefices Act, with which he was afraid his right hon. Friend was not very well acquainted. However, not to occupy time, he would withdraw the Amendment, simply stating that no distinction had been made out between this case and the precedent he had quoted. Before withdrawing it, however, there was one point raised by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Illingworth) that deserved attention. There ought to be a controlling power. His right hon. Friend referred to the fact that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had a responsible architect, and he, no doubt, would discharge his duty wisely. At the same time, it would be well to have a controlling power, and not leave matters in the hands of the architect of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. If the hon. Member could point out any way in which control could be strengthened, he would be very happy indeed to give the hon. Gentleman his support.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clauses 3 to 6, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Liability to repair, and to pay rates and taxes for official house).

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, this clause really related to the principle touched upon by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Illingworth). Here he found that if any question arose between the Dean and Chapter and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as to the application of the fabric fund, the matter was to be referred to the Lord Chancellor, the Lords of Appeal, the Privy Council, or the Judges of the High Court——

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is now making his observations not on Clause 7, but on Sub-section (7) of Clause 4, which is passed.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 8 *agreed to.*

Preamble.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he was right at last, and in the Preamble the word "restoration" did occur. There was the word "restoring," also, in line 17, and he would move the omission of these words, on the ground that they would afford the opportunity for money being expended for other purposes than those of repair. He had frequently stated that he had no confidence in the control of the Dean and Chapter over such expenditure, and he would ask his right hon. Friend whether any of the fund to be produced by this scheme would be applied to the work in the North Transept? Never was expenditure less justified than that on the North Transept. Whether it might be taken as a specimen of what might happen hereafter, he did not know. If this money was, in any way, to be applied to the repair or renewal of the North Transept, it would be a very improper use of the money. That work was pursued in the most blindfold manner, though not by the present authorities at Westminster Abbey. Here he might add a hope that his words might not be taken ill, because of the thin skins of authorities when any act of theirs was criticized. Such criticism was often taken as an exhibition of ill-will, but no one desired less to take up that position than he did. He understood, however, that his right hon. Friend said very distinctly, on Friday, that this Fabric Fund was to be applied to repairs only, and if that was so, there could be no objection to cutting out the word "restoration." Too often had there been examples of the restoration and improvement of old buildings, the result being the very reverse of the description. There had been seen in the noble Cathedral of London what the Dean and Chapter, in spite of protest, could do in the way of structural alteration, and a similar calamity might befall Westminster Abbey unless the words "restoration and improvement" were struck out. Although he had confidence in the present First Lord of the Treasury, and desired that, for the rest of his life, his right hon. Friend might continue to fill the place he now occupied, he might be succeeded by a Minister who would discard his right hon. Friend's statement and take up quite a different attitude. In framing this Act, he would ask that from the Preamble these words should be cut out, and subsequently, or in "another place," the consequential Amendments in other parts of the Bill might be made. He had no wish to prevent the Bill passing Committee that night.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, leave out "restoration or."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Preamble."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he sympathized very much with the protest of his right hon. Friend, but he would call his attention to the fact that the Preamble was simply a recital of what had already been done. A sum of £10,000 was granted in 1866, under an Act for the restoration and repair of Westminster Abbey, and this was a recital of what had been done, and then the Preamble went on to say that, by subsequent enactment in clauses following, the sum so advanced should be made matter of agreement; but what had been done could not be undone.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would withdraw his Amendment to renew it later on in the Preamble, when the word "restoration" occurred in line 6 of page 2.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 6, to leave out the words "restoration and."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Preamble."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, if it were any satisfaction to his right hon. Friend, he would not object to striking out the words from the Preamble that had no enacting value whatever. The Preamble had no enacting value in an Act; it was merely a statement of the general purpose of the Act. If it were any gratification to his right hon. Friend, he would strike the words out; but he could assure him it would not influence the Act, it had no meaning beyond the recognition of the fact that his right hon. Friend would recognize that the Abbey was in immediate want of repair and restoration to what it was. He agreed that the expenditure on the North Transept was much to be regretted; but no such expenditure was contemplated in this proposal; it was simply to place the Abbey in a sound condition, making good the ravages of time and climate.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, having elicited that expression of opinion, which was all he desired to obtain, he would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Preamble *agreed to.*

Bill *reported,* without Amendment.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would suggest that the third reading might now be taken.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, as that was suggested by his right hon. Friend, who was the only Member who had raised any objection to the Bill, perhaps the House would allow the next stage to be taken.

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION BILL [*Lords*].—[Bill 173.]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he had given Notice of an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months, which he did not intend to move, because the Government had agreed that the Bill should be referred to the Standing Committee upon Law. He was very glad that this was so. Many hon. Members of the House would be aware that constant dissatisfaction had been expressed, especially in discussions on the Estimates, with the present condition of the County Court system, and if the present Session should see carried into effect this much needed reform, that alone would redeem it from being a barren Session. Both the powers and procedure of the County Courts needed improving. He deplored that the Bill came down from the other House simply as a Consolidation Bill. There would have been great advantage had the Bill been carefully considered by a Select Committee there. At all events, now that the Standing Committee on Law Bills had been set up, this was a Bill upon which that Committee might very properly exercise its powers, and with great advantage. He understood that Notice of Reference was necessary, and that this would be given for the first day after the Recess?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he agreed to that.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th April.

MOTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in rising to move for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, and for other purposes relating thereto, said: There are two pressing questions with regard to the constitution and circumstances of the Land Courts in Ireland which must necessarily be dealt with by the Government during the present Session. The one arises from the accumulation of the arrears of business in the Land Courts, and the other arises from the circumstances that under the Act of 1881 the Land Commission would naturally come to an end in this year. Therefore, if the present system of land tenure is to continue—and without an enormous scheme of land purchase it must continue—it is absolutely necessary that the Government should bring in some Bill by which the existence of that Commission may be further prolonged. Now, the most pressing question, of course, is that with regard to arrears of business in the Land Courts; but it seems to the Government that it may be convenient to deal with two questions at once, not in a very ambitious fashion, but in a manner that will introduce certain improvements that are needed both in the method of dealing with business in the Sub-Commission Courts, and also with reference to the block of business in the Land Commission Courts. This is the object of the Bill which I am about to introduce. Hon. Members who have been present during the last fortnight must be aware that Members from Ireland have, from time to time, expressed their dissatisfaction with the course which the Government have taken with regard to the arrears of business. But I should first like to show the House that the Government is not really to blame in the matter of arrears of business in the Land Courts. Those who are conversant with what occurred in 1882 are aware that the result of that Act threw an immense mass of business upon the Land Courts, which they were not able to get through for a considerable period. I notice in this connection that hon. Members have been under some misapprehension. They have supposed, as I gather from their speeches, that the Government have been greatly to blame in that they have not earlier taken a step to deal with the accumulated arrears; but an observation of what we have done in the way of appointing Sub-Commissioners will, I think, dissipate that particular prejudice. If the House will compare what happened in 1882 with what is happening at the present moment, they will see that the difficulties which we have undergone were not unknown to our Predecessors. I find that in February, 1882, there were 69,000 cases awaiting hearing. In March and April there were 70,000 cases, and in April the Government increased the number of Sub-Commissioners from 36 to 48. In May and June the number of cases was 66,000, and in August the number was still 60,000. The number of Sub-Commissioners remained at 48 until the beginning of September, when it was raised to 51, and there it remained during four months. Nevertheless, the number of cases awaiting hearing kept up to 60,000 or more right up to the month of December, when the Government increased the number of Sub-Commissioners to 85. Even under that new *régime,* the number of cases awaiting hearing remained above 60,000 until the end of February, 1883. For 1887-8 the following are the figures which are comparable with those that I have just quoted to the House. In August, 1887, there were 13,000 cases awaiting hearing, and the number of Sub-Commissioners was 20. The cases rose to 30,000 in September, and we immediately appointed 10 additional Sub-Commissioners, making a total of 30.

In October and November, the cases rose to 62,000, and in the beginning of December we appointed 20 more Sub-Commissioners, making a total of 50, which was practically the same number as existed in 1882, when the number of cases was about the same. Therefore, the House will see that we have shown ourselves sensible of the gravity of the situation, and that we have endeavoured to meet it. At the same time we feel that there are great difficulties in simply trying to meet the accumulation of arrears merely by piling Commission on Commission and multiplying the number of Sub-Commissioners. That course involves several difficulties. It involves, among other things, the difficulties of constituting a new Court. It is an expensive process, not very convenient, and not very fast. It is costly to the Treasury, and not satisfactory politically. It is not at all easy, moreover, to find an efficient Legal Commissioner. As the House is aware, there is attached to every Sub-Commission one Legal Member who, as a rule, only sits with his Colleagues in Court, and does not attend them in their investigations into the actual circumstances of farms. He is paid a large salary by the Treasury, and he is very frequently a lawyer of not very considerable standing at the Irish Bar. You cannot get lawyers of first-class or high rank to take, even at a salary of £1,000 a-year, a Sub-Commissionership, which, from the necessity of the case, is probably a temporary employment, and which will deprive him of his connection with his *clientèle*, if such connection he is fortunate enough to have. But the House will recollect that the Sub-Commissions are not the only machinery by which cases are to be heard in the first instance. Litigants may also carry their cases before the County Court Judge, and it appears to the Government that much good would be done if we could strengthen the powers of the County Court Judge for hearing these cases. The County Court Judge is invariably a lawyer of high standing. He holds his appointment permanently, and therefore all those Gentlemen who are anxious to see judicial cases tried by Judges who hold their appointments not at the pleasure of the Executive, as the County Court Judges do, will be glad to see the work thrown upon them rather than upon any different tribunal, as when these cases come before a County Court Judge, who is usually a competent lawyer, it is extremely improbable that there will be an appeal to the higher Court on points of law. The reason why the County Court fails at this moment as a Court of First Instance is because the County Court Judge has to work, not with two Sub-Commissioners as an ordinary Sub-Commission Court has to work, but with one valuer. It appears to us that if we can make the Court of the County Court Judge as strong in dealing with questions of fact as the existing Sub-Commissioners' Courts are, and could utilize his very superior capacity of dealing with questions of law, we should constitute a very much better tribunal than any which now exists. In the Bill, therefore, which I am introducing to-night we propose, among other things, to strengthen the Court of the County Court Judge by substituting for the single valuer paid by the day, with whom he has to work, two gentlemen of the status of Sub-Commissioners. They will be obliged, as Sub-Commissioners are now, to go upon the farms they have to investigate in couples, and will give their advice to the County Court Judge, after their examination of the farm, carried on with the same care and the same efficiency as we may hope the investigations by the lay Sub Commissioners are as a rule carried on at the present moment. So far, therefore, what we propose to do is merely to strengthen and make more efficient the Court of the County Court Judge. But there is another evil attendant upon the present system which we desire to remedy. At present there are two Courts dealing with these cases in competition—the Sub-Commissioners' Court and the County Court. They are, of course, dealing with exactly the same cases, competitively so to speak. We propose, therefore, that a distribution of business shall be made between the Sub-Commissioners' Courts and the County Court Judges Courts, which shall take place at any rate as long as the arrears exist as they at present stand, and the County Court Judges shall be assisted by the Land Commissioners. That, I think, is the most controversial part of the Bill. I believe that by the Rules of the House I am not allowed to explain the remaining part of the Bill which deals with the Head Commission; but I may say briefly that while we propose to continue in office the Head Commissioners for another seven years, we propose also to introduce certain provisions which will make that Court more flexible, and, as we think, more competent to deal with the business with which it has to deal.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. PARNELL (Cork) said, so far as he had been able to gather the right hon. Gentleman (the Chief Secretary for Ireland) proposed to meet the difficulty in reference to the block of cases in the Land Court by appointing assessors to the County Court Judges to perform the same duties that lay Sub-Commissioners at present performed on the Sub-Commissions, and that he also proposed as it were to drive the litigants, or the persons applying for fair rents being fixed, into the County Courts whether they wished to go there or not. Under the Act of 1881 persons applying to have fair rents fixed could at their option apply to the County Court or to the Land Commission, and while the vast majority of applications up to the present time had been made on one side, the tenants, the vast majority of such applications had been made not to the County Court Judges but to the Court of Land Commissioners whence they had been remitted to the Sub-Commissions. It was evident, therefore, and might be taken as granted, that in the opinion of the tenants who constituted the vast majority of persons applying, the County Court Judges were not a favourable or a fair tribunal. Therefore it appeared to him at first sight that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was disadvantageous from the point of view of the tenant.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS COMMISSION BILL.—[BILL 191.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Stuart Wortley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he hoped the House would agree to take the second reading of this Bill, which contained no controversial matter, but merely embodied the Resolution of the House and empowered the Commission to inquire into the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he hoped there would be no objection. He would like to ask whether the powers of the Commission went as far as possible with regard to obtaining evidence, else he doubted if the inquiry would have a successful issue. It was different to that of last year; for then there were ascertained facts not available here. Could the right hon. Gentleman say when the Commission was likely to begin its work? He saw that the utmost penalty for refusing to give evidence was three months imprisonment, but he doubted if that would be sufficient in certain cases that might be brought before the Commission. Would the Commission settle its own mode of procedure? Would any provisions be made for the collection of evidence and the necessary expenses incurred or for counsel for those who took a position adverse to the Board?

MR. MATTHEWS said, there was no clause in the Bill providing for the payment of witnesses. The Commission was framed on the precedents of the Belfast Commission, the Truck Commission, and the Commission on the Sheffield outrages. The Commission would settle its own form of procedure. He had had a correspondence with the Chairman, who said the Commission would be prepared to begin work at once.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 154.]

(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) hoped the House would agree to read the Bill a second time. It was in effect to appoint a common holiday for Glasgow. He believed that one or two hon. Members wished to make some alterations in the Bill in regard to the rest of Scotland, and he would be glad to consider those alterations in Committee.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," —(*Sir George Trevelyan,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 10th April.

MOTIONS.

METROPOLITAN COMMONS (FARNBOROUGH) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Scheme under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Farnborough Common, Broadstreet Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street Green, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 192.]

METROPOLITAN COMMONS (CHISLEHURST AND ST. PAUL'S CRAY) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Scheme under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray Commons, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 193.]

METROPOLIS (WHITECHAPEL AND LIMEHOUSE) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for modifying the Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) Improvement Scheme, 1876, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 194.]

PILOTAGE.

Ordered, That the Committee on Pilotage do consist of Nineteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Acland, Mr. H. T. Anstruther, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Craig, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Gourley, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. King, Mr. Llewellyn, Admiral Mayne, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir William Pearce, Sir John Puleston, Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Bazley White, and Mr. Charles Wilson:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Select Committee to join with a Committee of the Lords, on Private Bill Legislation, *nominated* of,—Mr. Raikes, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATE.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Revenue Departments Estimate do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of, —Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Hankey, Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. David Plunket, Mr. Raikes, and Mr. Stansfeld:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

ESTIMATES PROCEDURE (GRANTS OF SUPPLY.)

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply) do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of, —Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Randolph Churchill, Viscount Curzon, Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Goschen, Lord Hartington, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Howell, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. John Dillon, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Salt, and Mr. Whitbread:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN BILL.

Resolution [March 23] *reported,* and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 195.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 27*th March*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Army (Annual) * (55); East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) * (56); Westminster Abbey * (57).

Royal Assent — Consolidated Fund (No. 1) [51 *Vict.* c. 1]; National Debt (Conversion) [51 *Vict.* c. 2]; Statute Law Revision [51 *Vict.* c. 3].

Their Lordships met;—and having gone through the Business on the Paper without debate,

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock, till Friday, the 13th of April next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 27*th March*, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees—Commons, *appointed* and *nominated*; House of Commons (Admission of Strangers), *nominated*.

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee—Resolution* [March 26] *reported*.

Public Bills—*Ordered*—Customs and Inland Revenue.*

Ordered — *First Reading* — Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) * [197]; Victoria University * [198]; Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) * [199].

Second Reading—Customs (Isle of Man) * [195].

Committee—Report—Third Reading—Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * [191], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE—THE CLEANSING COMMITTEE.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the duty of the Dublin Metropolitan Police to report to the Chief Commissioner all cases where they find the footways (over which the Dublin Corporation have no control as to cleansing) are not regularly cleansed daily by the occupiers or owners in the City and Metropolitan District; whether it is their duty, on finding that such cleansing is not done, to summon the owners or occupiers; whether he is aware of the Resolutions of the Cleansing Committee on the 7th January, 1885, 3rd March, 1886, 25th January and 23rd February, 1888, calling the attention of the Commissioners of Police to the condition of the footways in Dublin, especially those in front of public buildings; and that, notwithstanding these complaints, no action has been taken by the police in the matter; and, whether, in the face of these repeated complaints of the Cleansing Committee to the Commissioners of Police, he will take steps to secure that the bye-laws of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, sections 1 and 2, shall in future be enforced by the Commissioners of Police?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police reported that up to the present the duty of enforcing the law dealing with the cleansing of footpaths by the occupiers of premises had been undertaken by the Dublin Metropolitan Police. During the half-year ending with the present month 824 persons were summoned for neglect in this matter, while about three times that number were cautioned. However, the Commissioner added, taking everything into consideration, the citizens of Dublin fulfilled their obligations in this regard reasonably well. Probably the best remedy would be for the Corporation of Dublin themselves to undertake the cleansing of the footways; as was done by the Corporations of Rathmines, Pembroke, and Blackrock with satisfactory results.

Mr. P. M'DONALD: Can the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say whether the Corporations of cities and towns in England and Scotland undertake the cleansing of footpaths?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I do not know.

Mr. P. M'DONALD: I can inform him they do not.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—SHETLAND MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can state what improvements he proposes to make in the Shetland Mail Service, in respect of more frequent and direct communication between Lerwick and Aberdeen, as was requested in a Memorial recently addressed to him by inhabitants of Shetland?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am giving careful consideration to the Memorials for an improvement of the Postal Service between Aberdeen and Lerwick, and I am in communication with the Treasury upon the subject. I am not in a position to say more at the present time.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — "CHEERING FOR MR. BLUNT AND LADY ANNE BLUNT IN COURT, AT ATHENRY."

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is correct, as reported in the public prints, that, at a Crimes Court, held at Athenry on the 20th instant, District Inspector Hamilton stated in his evidence that he

> "Considered cheering for Mr. Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt worse than using sticks and stones;"

and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that District Inspector Hamilton, in replying to a question at the trial, stated that he did not consider a crowd using sticks and stones worse than cheering for Mr. and Lady Anne Blunt; but he immediately corrected this statement by saying what he intended to convey was—

> "That the conduct of a crowd with sticks and stones was, in his opinion, not worse than the conduct of the crowd at the Railway Station."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, Is there any way in which the Government can manage to convey to these magistrates a hint, that if they would confine themselves to the proper discharge of their duties, and not make speeches, the interest of justice would be better served?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I think the hon. Gentleman has not read the Question. It refers to a District Inspector, and not to a magistrate; and the evidence was given by the Inspector in a Court of Law.

EGYPT (FINANCE)—STAMP DUTIES ON FOREIGNERS.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can inform the House when the European Powers are likely to accede to the desire of the Egyptian Government to impose the Stamp Duties already borne by Natives, on foreigners residing in Egypt, in accordance with the Convention of 1885; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing from what taxation foreigners in Egypt are exempt, but to which the Natives are subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The proposal now before the Powers is that the laws for the imposition of the Stamp Duties and Licence Tax on foreigners should be settled between the Egyptian Government and the Commissioners of the Public Debt. Projects of such laws have already been carefully prepared, and have been approved by Her Majesty's Government, who are using their best efforts to procure the assent of the other Powers to their promulgation. We have not the means of giving the Return asked for; but Sir Evelyn Baring has recently stated, in a despatch on other matters, that when once these taxes are made general, the position of Europeans will, so far as taxation is concerned, be assimilated in all important respects to that of the Natives.

POST OFFICE — CARRIAGE ON RAILWAY BORNE PARCELS.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) (for Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state the amount collected on railway borne parcels each year since the establishment of the Parcel Post, and the amount paid to Railway Companies in respect of the carriage of such parcels?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University) in reply, said, the amount could be given if the right hon. Gentleman would move for a Return. The figures were too numerous to be given in answer to a Question.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—SAFETY FROM FIRE.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the extreme inconvenience and loss which lately resulted from the breakdown of telegraphic communication in New York; whether it is true that nearly 70 per cent of all the telegrams of the United Kingdom pass through St. Martin's-le-Grand, the apparatus being all under one roof, and that the two top floors are above the high pressure of the water mains; whether it is true that not long since the whole building was jeopardized by a fire which raged in Paternoster Row; whether consideration has been given to the great risk run by present arrangements; and, whether it is intended to duplicate the Department on the land lately acquired in Aldersgate Street?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that I have no official information of the inconvenience and loss which have resulted from the breakdown of telegraphic communication in New York; but I understand that the breakdown was caused by a snowstorm, which damaged the wires. About 50 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom pass through the Central Telegraph Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. Only on the top floor of that building are the fire hydrants not supplied from the street mains; they are supplied from tanks on the roof containing 28,000 gallons of water, pumped up from the artesian well on the premises. It is not true that the building was in any danger from a fire in Paternoster Row. The present arrangements have been made after mature consideration, and there is no intention to establish a duplicate Central Telegraph Office. The building, I may add, is fireproof throughout.

ARMY—THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS—THE HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is in force a General Order that the Queen's Regulations shall be strictly observed on all occasions by every corps; and, whether the Honourable Artillery Company is not expressly named in those Regulations among the regiments and corps of Her Majesty's Service?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Queen's Regulations are only applicable to such a corps as the Honourable Artillery Corps when subject to military law under the Army Act. The only reference to the Honourable Artillery Company in the Queen's Regulations is in Section 1, paragraph 3*a*, which lays down that, in consideration of its antiquity, the Honourable Artillery Company will take precedence next after the Regular Forces.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PAYMENT OF RESULT FEES.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What time after the date of examination for result fees in Irish National Schools are such fees paid to the successful candidates; and, whether the same ought not to be paid within one month after the examination?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The Question has been put down at such a short Notice that I am sorry I cannot answer it.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—PROMOTION TO THE LOWER DIVISION.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Committee appointed to inquire into the cases of meritorious Civil Service writers, who were recommended for promotion to the Lower Division by the responsible Heads of their Departments, examined each case individually; whether a Report was made thereon; and, if so, will be laid, for the information of Members of this House, upon the Table; whether the Treasury intend to take any further steps respecting the recommendations of those writers who were not included in the first list of promotions; and, will they soon notify their decision?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The work done by copyists recommended for promotion was inquired into, and each case was considered by the Committee, which reported to the Treasury. The Treasury will report the result to the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments; but I do not propose to present Papers to the House.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—PILOTAGE CERTIFICATES.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the question that a pilotage certificate only shall be granted to a British subject, as proposed to be enacted by "The Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill," will be considered by the Committee which was appointed on Monday last to inquire into the subject of pilotage; and, if not, whether instructions will be given to the Committee to do so; and, what course the Government propose to adopt with regard to those certificates at present held by foreign masters or mates, authorizing them to pilot their own ships, under the provisions of "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854?"

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.) said, he certainly understood that this subject was included in the reference to the Pilotage Committee. In regard to the second part of the Question, existing certificates would, of course, hold good, pending the inquiry.

THE NEW HEBRIDES—WITHDRAWAL OF THE FRENCH TROOPS.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the French troops have now quitted the New Hebrides, pursuant to the arrangement made by Her Majesty with the Government of the French Republic?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Yes, Sir; the French detachments were withdrawn on the 15th instant, which was within the period of the engagement.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (ASSAULTS BY CONSTABLES)—PATRICK SWEENEY.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Sweeney, who was charged on Thursday last, at the Thames Police Court, with assaulting Constable Dales, 441 H, whilst in the execution of his duty; whether Sweeney appeared in the dock with his "face severely cut, covered with blood, and very much swollen;" whether the constable admitted that he struck Sweeney; whether he is aware that the learned magistrate discharged the prisoner, and said that "the officer used more force than was necessary;" and, whether he will draw the attention of the Public Prosecutor to the case, with a view to the complaint against Constable Dales being investigated in open Court?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner that the constable found Sweeney kicking a woman, who was lying on the pavement. The constable interfered, and was thereupon attacked by Sweeney and two women, dragged to the ground, struck and kicked. The constable stated that in the course of this struggle he struck Sweeney. Sweeney appeared in the dock with a swollen lip and with blood on his face, which had apparently come from his nose. The magistrate discharged the prisoner, making the observation quoted in the Question. The matter is now being investigated by the Chief Constable of the district. I have no reason at present for considering it a case for the Public Prosecutor. Sweeney stated that he was going to apply for a summons. This will be the proper course to secure an investigation in open Court.

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the revenues paid to King Theebaw from the Burmah Ruby Mines averaged for some years 1,50,000 rupees annually, and in the last year amounted to about 1,90,000 rupees, in addition to the fact that all rubies of the value of 2,000 rupees and upwards became the property of the King; whether, up to December last, the Indian Government had received from these mines only about 25,000 rupees during the preceding 12 months; whether a loss of current revenue is a permanent loss to the Indian

Exchequer, owing to the fact that these mines are practically inexhaustible for a great number of years; whether sufficient precautions are taken to prevent smuggling; and whether it is the fact that large numbers of rubies are known to be disposed of to merchants and others without any royalty having been paid upon them; and, whether the difference to the Indian Revenue between the royalties actually received and the terms offered by Messrs. Streeter has been a loss of about 30,000 rupees per month, or 3,60,000 rupees a-year?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1) According to the best information possessed by the Secretary of State, King Theebaw's revenue from the Ruby Mines did not average so much as £150,000; and he never received so much as £190,000. Stones of the value of 2,000 rupees were Royal perquisites; but were generally secreted, or broken up by the finders. (2) So far as reports have reached the Secretary of State.—Yes. (3) Cannot be answered till the Report of the scientific expert sent out by the Secretary of State has been received. (4) All precautions which are practicable are taken; but some smuggling undoubtedly takes place. (5) The diminution of revenue referred to does take place while the mines are unworked; but as the rubies are still there it is expected to be recouped in years to come.

MR. HANBURY asked, when the scientific expert would report?

SIR JOHN GORST replied that he believed he was at the mines now, and his Report might be expected very soon; but he could not fix a date.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—TENANTS OF MR. W. L. JOYNT.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the leasehold tenants on the County Limerick estate of Mr. William Lane Joynt, Crown and Treasury Solicitor, have served notices for the fixing of fair rents, and, pending the hearing of their cases, have offered to pay three-fourths of the rent due on the 29th of September, last, but are being served with writs for the full amount; and, as there is no possibility of the cases of these tenants being decided for some months, will he use his influence with this official of the Irish Government to induce him to stay proceedings until the tenants obtain relief from the Land Court?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I am informed that three writs were served on the 2nd instant on leasehold tenants of Mr. Lane Joynt for the half-year's rent due in September last. These tenants were among eight leasehold tenants on the estate who have applied to have fair rents fixed. They have since settled.

CRIMINAL LAW—HEALTH OF JOHN FROST IN GAOL — ALLEGED NEGLECT.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of John Frost, late of 8, Emmett Street, Poplar, who was convicted on the 24th of November last, for receiving stolen goods, and who died in the hospital of the gaol on the 27th of December; whether he is aware that a strong feeling exists that Mr. Frost, who was suffering from serious illness when convicted, did not receive proper treatment when in gaol, and that his death was thereby caused; and, whether he will institute a searching inquiry into all the facts of the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have seen a report of the inquest held on the body of this man. The allegation referred to by the hon. Member was before the jury, and was carefully considered by them. Their verdict was that the man received proper medical care and attention while in the prison. I have desired the Prison Commissioners to inquire whether there is any reason to doubt that the jury formed a correct opinion. Forfeiture of money now no longer exists, and, therefore, the £15 that Frost had in his possession will be handed over to his family.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE—THE GOVERNORSHIP.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) (for Mr. MUNRO-FERGUSON) (Leith, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, on the next appointment to the Governorship of the Cape of Good Hope, it is proposed to combine that office, as at present, with the High Commissionership of South Africa?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that this Question has received careful consideration, and that Her Majesty's Government, as at present advised, do not propose to make any alteration in the existing arrangements. I may add that the relations between the Cape Ministers and the High Commissioner are on a very satisfactory footing; and it would be undesirable to check that cordial co-operation, which has been of benefit to British and Native interests throughout South Africa.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—RETURNS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Why the Returns of Judicial Rents for November and December, 1887, having been laid upon the Table on the 22nd of February, have not yet been distributed, and with whom the responsibility for the delay rests?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the Question of the hon. Member only appeared on the Paper that morning; but he had ascertained that the Returns were duly presented and laid on the Table at the proper time. Some delay must necessarily occur before these Returns were printed.

MR. J. E. ELLIS asked if, on previous occasions, these Returns had not always been printed within 10 days after being laid on the Table?

MR. MADDEN said, he was unable to answer the Question without Notice.

POST OFFICE — EMBOSSED STAMPED ENVELOPES FOR INDIA AND AUSTRALIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state why there are not embossed stamped envelopes for 5*d.* and 6*d.* respectively for India and Australia for sale here as there are 1*d.* embossed envelopes; and, is he aware that in India the 5*d.* embossed envelope is procurable, and has been for the past 25 years?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It has been thought that the general demand for such envelopes is not sufficient to justify the expense of supplying them. If they were introduced it would be impossible to limit their supply to certain towns; and there are valid objections to increasing unnecessarily the various denominations of stamps, and thereby the pecuniary responsibility of Postmasters. But if a request for such envelopes were made by a responsible body representing the Chinese and Australian trade I should be willing to consider it.

POST OFFICE—MALTA AND GIBRALTAR—SMALL REMITTANCES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is it true that the cost of sending small sums of money to Malta and Gibraltar, to which emigrants do not go, ranges from ½*d.* for 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1½*d.* for 20*s.*; yet these sums cannot be sent through the post to Canada, or any other place where the emigrants do go, for less than 6*d.*; and, has he under his consideration any alteration of this system?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The case is as stated by the hon. Member, and the explanation is simple. To Malta and Gibraltar postal orders are available on the same terms as within the United Kingdom itself. Indeed, until recently the Post Offices in those two Dependencies were under the direct control of the Imperial Post Office, and practically enjoyed all the advantages of the Imperial Postal System. Canada, on the other hand, although invited to participate in the postal order system to the same extent as it has been adopted in India and some of the Colonies, has not hitherto shown any disposition to do so. Consequently, the money order system alone is open to the public for the remittance of small sums of money, for which the lowest charge is 6*d.* for any sum not exceeding £2. I shall be happy to communicate again with the Canadian Post Office on the subject.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—EXAMINATION FOR OUTDOOR OFFICERS.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as no notice of the suspension of the examination for outdoor officers in the Customs Department was given, he can now state the probable date of the next examination; and, whether the age of candidates now within the limits will be extended, in order that it may be competent for them to come up for examination, as in the case of the candidates for engineer studentships?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I can give no date when the next examination of this class is likely to be held, as there are now more outdoor officers in the Service than will hereafter be required, besides which there are some candidates already qualified for the post. It is not intended to extend the limits of age qualifying for the examination.

IRISH LAND COMMISSIONERS—SITTINGS IN FERMANAGH.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that there has been no sitting of the Land Commissioners in Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh, since April, 1887, and that a large number of originating notices have been recently served in the District; and, when it is proposed that the Sub-Commissioners will sit in Lisnaskea?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sir, as the Question appeared without sufficient Notice I have been unable to get the information necessary to answer it.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that I shall repeat the Question after the Recess.

IRELAND — RAILWAY COMMUNICATION—DONEGAL.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) (for Mr. Mac Neill) (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take any, and, if so, what, steps to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, in reference to railway communication in the County of Donegal with the towns of Donegal and Killybegs?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government intend to deal with the consideration of the Report of the Royal Commission in detail. The first portion of the Report relates to the important subject of arterial drainage, in connection with which a Bill is now in an advanced stage of preparation. They are not at present in a position to state when they will be able to consider the recommendation in the particular case alluded to in the Question, which belongs to a later period of their Report.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SALE OF A BOYCOTTED FARM.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following account of a case mentioned in the last Report of the Irish Land Commissioners as having occurred in the County of Louth:—

> "A purchaser and mortgagor who owed 12 half-yearly instalments was evicted from his farm after all attempts at compromise had failed. The farm was then set up for sale by us, and we were obliged to buy it in as the sale was Boycotted;"

whether this farm still remains in the hands of the Commissioners; if not, when it was sold, and how much of the price was absorbed in costs, expenses, and payment of caretakers; and, in how many instances the Commissioners have been able to effect sales of a purchaser's interest against his will since their Report?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that directions were given in October last to the Solicitor of the Commission to proceed and attempt to sell the farm in question. Some private negotiations took place, but did not lead to any result. The lands have been advertised for sale by auction, and will be set up for sale in Drogheda on the

31st instant. With regard to the last paragraph, the Commissioners have given me no information, and I cannot answer it at present.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Am I to understand, then, that the farm in question is still in the hands of the Land Commissioners?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Yes, Sir. The sale is announced to take place on the 31st.

POST OFFICE (CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE)—SICK PAY.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office, when absent from duty owing to illness for more than one day, are required to furnish a medical certificate; whether the chief medical officer and his assistants often grant leave of absence for this cause; and, whether, in all cases of illness proved to the satisfaction of the chief medical officer, he will grant full pay, as is given to other Civil servants of equal status?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): It is the case, as implied in the Question of the hon. Member, that the telegraphists at the Central Station, when absent ill for more than one day, have to furnish a medical certificate, and that such certificate is not unfrequently given by the medical officer. But it is not the case that in the matter of pay during illness the telegraphists are subject to different Regulations from other Post Office servants of corresponding rank.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT —ASSENT OF TRUSTEES.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the case of the death of one or more of the Trustees, the Bank of England insists that the probate or burial certificate of the deceased Trustee must accompany assent to the Conversion Scheme; if so, whether, with a view to facilitate conversion, he will consider the advisability of allowing the assent of surviving Trustees to be accepted, leaving proof of the deceased Trustee to remain for future action?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I have made inquiries at the Bank of England, and I was given to understand that the authorities will not insist upon the probate or burial certificate of the deceased Trustee accompanying the consent to the Conversion Scheme. On the contrary, it has been agreed to facilitate arrangements by allowing the surviving Trustee to assent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is able now to state in what manner the Local Government Board propose to deal with the electoral representation at the new London County Council of the present area of the City of London; and, whether they propose to avail themselves of the exception made in section 52, sub-section 5 (b), to the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, and give to the City area a larger proportion of representation than its population justifies; and, if so, in what manner, and to what extent?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think I must ask the hon. Gentleman to allow me to reserve any statement as to the representation of particular areas until we come to the clauses of the Bill dealing with that matter.

COAL AND WINE DUES—RENEWAL.

Mr. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will communicate to the House what course Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue with regard to the renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have not felt themselves at liberty to depart from the position they have taken up on this question. They are unable to give their support to the Bill suggested by the existing authority, and will leave it to the House at large to determine whether or not it is expedient that the Coal and Wine Dues should be renewed.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked, whether the Government would be prepared to give any facilities for discussing the question of the Coal and Wine Dues, which was a subject of the greatest importance to the ratepayers of London?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have had no Notice of the Question, and my answer must be of the same character as that which I have just given. I cannot undertake to give facilities for a measure of this kind, for which the Government are not responsible.

MARKET RIGHTS AND TOLLS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, Whether any steps had been taken to fill the vacancy on the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls caused by the resignation of the hon. Member for Londonderry?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, he hoped that the vacancy might be filled up in a few days.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he wished to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which he had given him private Notice. It was in reference to the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) Bill. The second reading of that Bill had been objected to from the other side of the House. He had communicated to the right hon. Gentleman the desire of Scotch Members that a second reading should be given to the measure; and he begged to ask him whether he would be assisted in any way by the Government in getting the Bill put down at some future time in order that it might in the meantime be withdrawn?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman had been good enough to send me a letter on the subject signed by several Scotch Members, to whose wishes I should be glad, if it were possible, to give effect. But the hon. Gentleman must be aware that there are many other hon. Gentlemen in the position he occupies—who have Bills in which they take great interest, and which are also interesting to other Members with whom they are associated. I greatly fear that if the Government were to make an exception in favour of one Bill, I should be pressed to make exceptions for other Bills, for which it would be utterly impossible for me to afford facilities. Under all the circumstances, I am sure that at this very early period of the Session the hon. Member will have abundant opportunities of bringing forward his measure; and, in any case, should he not succeed in bringing it on, the object he has in view is covered entirely by a Bill of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has charge.

INLAND REVENUE (IRELAND)—CUSTOMS FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) said, he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question of which he had given him private Notice—What was the nature and extent of certain frauds which had occurred in a Customs bonded warehouse recently in Belfast; what number of casks of bonded spirits was removed without payment of duty; how many casks were found in the warehouse of which no account had been taken in the Departmental books; what number of casks were found to contain water only; and, whether the Government intended to take steps to prevent these occurrences in Belfast bonded warehouses in future?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: On recently taking stock at one of the Customs bonded warehouses in Belfast it was found that certain casks of spirits containing together upwards of 2,000 gallons proof, and a cask of wine containing 58 liquid gallons, had been delivered without payment of duty by means of fraudulent alterations in the delivery orders. These frauds were the work of a defaulting servant of the proprietors of the warehouse; and the duty on the wine and spirits thus improperly removed from the bonded warehouse had since been recovered. Seven casks of spirits, of which no account existed in the official books, as well as five casks of water, were also found in the warehouse. There is, besides, some evidence of malpractices in regard to eight other casks, as to which further inquiries are being prosecuted. The Board of Customs are taking steps with the view of preventing the recurrence of these practices.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked, with reference to the date of the second reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, for which they had only 12 days for its consideration, Whether the First Lord of the Treasury could not find it consistent to give a longer time for the consideration of the measure? Twelve days were not enough for hon. Members to make themselves masters of this somewhat formidable measure. There had been no Bill like it since the Irish Land Bill or the Irish Church Bill, 18 days being given in the one case and three weeks in the other for consideration.

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he fully appreciated the spirit in which the Question was put; but, looking at the course of Public Business, and having regard to the fact that the principal discussion on a measure of this kind must be in Committee, the Government felt it necessary to take the second reading of the Bill at the earliest possible period, consistently with due notice to the country and to the subject-matter of the Bill. Seeing that the President of the Local Government Board explained the measure at full length on Monday week, he thought that an interval of three weeks and a few days after that statement was sufficient for the consideration of the Bill by the country and by the House before they were asked to assent to its principle.

PUBLIC OFFICES—THE ADMIRALTY BUILDINGS—THE NEW PLANS.

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked the First Commissioner of Works, When the new plans of the Admiralty Buildings would be laid before the House?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): The plans have this day been placed in the Tea Room, where they can be inspected by Members.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question with reference to the Eviction Returns before the Recess. In cases of proceedings under the Act of 1887, as the House knows, the tenant, on receipt of the notice, becomes a caretaker, and if he is put out of his holding I understand that that is not technically an eviction. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he will take care that the putting out of tenants who have thus been reduced to the status of caretaker will figure in future Eviction Returns?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Yes, Sir; the whole question of these Eviction Returns requires careful revision. I do not know any set of statistics more utterly deceptive, or that lead to more erroneous conclusions, than those eviction statistics which have been laid upon the Table since the time of the late Mr. Forster. The new Act necessitates some changes of form; and I am going into the whole subject, and will do my best to see that the particulars that the right hon. Gentleman asks for shall be given on the face of the Returns.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—PILOTAGE CERTIFICATES.

Sir HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the question that a pilotage certificate only should be granted to a British subject as proposed to be enacted by the Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill would be considered by the Committee which was appointed on Monday last to inquire into the subject of pilotage; and, if not, whether instructions would be given to the Committee to do so; and what course the Government proposed to adopt with regard to those certificates at present held by foreign masters or mates authorizing them to pilot their own ships under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): No doubt it will be in the discretion of the Committee to take evidence as to the question referred to by the hon. Member. As regards the latter part of the Question, I may say that, pending the inquiry, those masters and mates who already hold certificates will continue to hold them.

IRELAND—APPOINTMENT OF MR. STONEY, J.P., D.L.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Was there any truth in the statement that Mr. Stoney, J.P., D.L., of Rosturk Castle, County Mayo, had recently been appointed by the Lord Chancellor as one of the district collectors under the Court of Chancery; and whether, if so, Mr. Stoney is the same man who had recently been censured by an official of the Local Government Board, Mr. Hicks, with having been guilty of gross misconduct in the distribution of public funds entrusted to him by the House; and, whether he had also been censured by the Lord Chancellor?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have no official information on the subject. I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the Lord Chancellor has nothing whatever to do with the appointment. It rests with the Land Court.

Mr. DEASY: Will the right hon. Gentleman draw the attention of the Judges of the Landed Estates Court to the facts I have recited?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid such a proceeding would be entirely beyond the functions of the Executive.

Mr. DEASY: I beg to give Notice that on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House I shall draw attention to this matter.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—QUESTIONS THEREON.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I wish, Sir, to put a Question to you on a point of Order with reference to the Report of Ways and Means. I have a general inquiry to make of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to his Financial Statement last night. What I wish to know is, whether I can make that inquiry on the Report of the Resolution relating to the Wine Duties, which seem to me to raise the whole question of the Financial Statement?

Mr. SPEAKER: Any inquiry or discussion would only be relevant which referred to the subject of the Resolution which was passed last night in dealing with the Wine Duties. The noble Lord, therefore, upon that Resolution would have to confine his remarks to the Wine Duties.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The question is not without importance. I suppose I am right in assuming that the grants in aid of local taxation for the present year remain practically the same as last night. Am I also right in assuming that, in addition to those grants in aid, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to give to local taxation resources an amount equal to about £1,700,000? If I am correct in those two assumptions, I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question which he will see has a most important bearing on the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill. Will that additional grant of £1,700,000 be dependent and conditional on the Bill passing into law—that is to say, that if it does not pass into law will this further grant of £1,700,000 be withdrawn, and will the grants in aid of local taxation remain as they are at present?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am much obliged, and so is my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, to the noble Lord for having put this Question. The grant of £1,700,000 will be entirely dependent on the passing of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill. There is a clause in that Bill which regulates the temporary arrangement before the new authorities are established; but if the House should reject the whole scheme of Local Government the whole scheme of the re-adjustment of the local and Imperial finance would fall to the ground at the same time, and have to be considered in succeeding years when Parliament might feel disposed to take a different view. It is most important that it should be understood that the proposed re-adjustment of local and Imperial burdens must depend upon the plan as a whole, and is dependent upon its being carried as a whole. If the plan as a whole is not carried, we shall remain as we are; the grants in aid of local taxation would continue to be given this year, and that relief will not be given which this and previous Governments have always intended to be part and parcel of any general scheme for the reform of local government.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION (SCOTLAND).

MR. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.): I wish to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with regard to the distribution of the £240,000 proposed to be paid in aid of local taxation in Scotland, Whether it is intended that the Secretary for Scotland shall issue a scheme for the distributing of the Fund; and, if so, when that scheme will be laid on the Table of the House?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The matter will be dealt with at the earliest possible date; but, of course, it will be for Parliament to vote the sum, and Parliament will then be informed of the proposals of the Government. With regard to the disposal of the sum, action will not be taken without a Parliamentary Vote having been obtained.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE DUTY ON HORSES.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I wish to put a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the proposed Horse Tax, Whether the tax of £1 to be placed on certain horses will include ponies; and, if, not, under what height those animals are to be exempted from the tax? I wish to ask, further, whether the tax of £5 on racehorses will include horses ridden in steeplechases?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As my right hon. Friend warned us on this Bench last night that we scarcely know the difference between a horse and a cow, it would be most imprudent on my part to answer any Questions without taking measures for consulting with those who are intimately acquainted with the details of steeple-chasing and horse-racing. My right hon. Friend was not able to give me Notice of the Question; but I will take care that the whole question as to the breeding of horses shall be most carefully considered. With regard to the question of ponies, I shall put them precisely on the same footing as when the old Horse Tax was in force—that is to say, they will have to pay.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—DEFINITION OF A "PLEASURE HORSE."

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he wished to put a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to horses. He understood that among his constituents there would be great difficulty in defining what a "pleasure horse" was. He therefore asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could state, rather more definitely than he had done yesterday, what he meant by a "pleasure horse" or a horse kept for pleasure, as definiteness was of importance in that matter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Of course, the definition is difficult; but, speaking broadly, horses used for trade will be exempted, and horses employed in what may be called pleasure and kept as a luxury will be taxed. There are horses just on the border between those two classes which will have to be clearly defined; but it will be more satisfactory that the hon. Member and the House generally should see the Resolution, and then judge as to the matter, rather than that I should make a further statement on the subject. But in the few days that will intervene before the House meets again I shall pay due attention to all the definitions, and give full weight to the suggestions which have been made on this very important question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE EDUCATION CODE, 1888.

In reply to Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it would not be necessary to bring the more important Articles of the Scotch Education Code into operation before the 30th of April. Under these circumstances, if an Address to the Crown was put on the Paper on the 13th of April, and moved before the 27th, the hon. Member would be in ample time to obtain the judgment of the House upon any proposal he might make.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.

EXPLANATION.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he might be permitted to offer a word in explanation of some observations which had fallen from him on a previous occasion in regard to the Westminster Abbey Bill. It was supposed that he had referred to the position of Mr. Christian, the architect of the Ecclesiastical Commission. The work at Westminster Abbey would be carried on primarily under the direction of Mr. Pearson, the well-known architect, than whom a more able and competent person probably could not be found. But Mr. Christian would represent the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as the body through whom the money necessary for the repair and restoration would be advanced. The work would be strictly in the nature of repairs, and not of alterations.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS COMMISSION BILL.—[BILL 191.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Powers of Commissioners).

MR. FIRTH (Dundee), in moving, in page 2, line 5, to insert the word "twelve," instead of "three," said, that the object of the Amendment was to increase the amount of imprisonment which the Commission might award to a witness for contempt of Court, that contempt of Court consisting of declining to answer questions put to him on matters which the Commissioners had to inquire into. Having regard to the character of the noble Lord and others who constituted the Commission, he submitted that that was not too much power to give them. He was of opinion that 12 months might be deterrent, while the shorter term of three months might not.

Amendment proposed, in line 5, to leave out the word "three," in order to insert "twelve."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Clause."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he thought the hon. and learned Member would not persist with the Amendment when he came to consider that this was a pure case of contempt of Court. In the Trades' Unions Commission power was given to the Commissioners to commit a man for three months if he was guilty of contempt of Court. In the Belfast Riots Commission a similar power was given, and he believed that the same term of imprisonment for contempt of Court was contained in one of the provisions of the Corrupt Practices Prevention Act. Of course, he agreed with the hon. Member that they might trust to the discretion that would be exercised by the Court; but he was of opinion that it was unnecessary to increase the power of imprisonment.

MR. FIRTH said, he believed that a longer term of imprisonment than three months had been inflicted where there had been contempt of Court in Election Petitions, where a witness declined to answer questions put to him by the Election Commissioner. In one case a man was sent to prison for six months, and in the case of this Commission it was certainly one which demanded that the objects of the Legislature should not be defeated.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 2 and 3 *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Indemnity to witnesses).

MR. FIRTH said, that this was the clause upon which he had asked a Question last night—namely, whether any provision had been made for the payment of witnesses who were required to give evidence before the Commission? Probably some Member of the Government would answer that Question now.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he understood that the Commission had been drawn up in the ordinary form. The practice was for the Commissioners to call before them such witnesses as they required, and to exercise their discretion in the matter of paying their expenses. The Commissioners would have power to refuse the expenses of a witness if they considered that he had not spoken the truth.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 *agreed to.*

Bill *reported,* without Amendment.

MR. MATTHEWS: I think there will be no objection if I now move that the Bill be read the third time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read the third time," —(*Mr. Secretary Matthews,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [26th March],

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said, that the Bill was a most disappointing and unsatisfactory answer to the request which had been made to the Government ever since the beginning of the Session, not only by the Irish Members who sat below the Gangway, but also by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). The grievance which it was supposed that the Bill would remedy was that there was a block in the Land Court which prevented tenants receiving the benefit of the Land Act. This block existed in every county in Ireland at the present moment. If the Question Papers were looked over for the last five or six weeks it would be found that nearly every Member representing a popular constituency in Ireland had complained of the glut of cases in his constituency; but they had all been put off from time to time with the excuse that the matter was under consideration, or that there was a lack of men of sufficient legal standing at the Irish Bar to do the work. Take his own constituency of County Dublin, where the block was, perhaps, not so bad as in other places, though even there it was quite bad enough. In the years 1881 and 1882 the tenants of the County of Dublin made an effort to get into the Land Courts; but a brief experience in those Courts induced them to drop that experiment, as the reductions given were perfectly farcical, and in many cases preposterously small. In some cases—upon Lord Talbot de Malahide's estate, for instance—the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners exceeded the figures given by even the landlord's valuer. In consequence of this state of affairs the tenants ceased to trouble the Land Courts. Of late, however, they had gone in again, and those who had had their cases heard had been able to get sweeping reductions. But the bulk of them just on entering the Court, from which they had been kept out for five or six years, had been stopped on the threshold by what he considered was a conspiracy between the Government and the landlords to prevent the tenants from getting the benefit of the Act. The result was that the tenants must go on paying the old rack-rents which it was morally certain would, if the cases could be heard, be reduced from 20 per cent to 50 per cent. Being forced to pay these rack-rents they would get into arrears, and under the "eviction-made-easy" clauses of the Land Act of 1887 they would then be served with notices through the post, which would prevent them from getting into the Land Court at all. These circumstances had been present to the minds of the Nationalist Members during the past six weeks; they had also been present to the mind of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The landlords had grasped at Section 7 as an instrument for robbing their tenants and turning them out of their holdings, which the hon. Member for Tyrone did not expect, but which the Nationalist Members fully anticipated. Meanwhile the block of the Land Courts continued, and tenants were kept out who would otherwise, under the present scale of prices, obtain large reductions. At last the Government had brought forward an answer to their complaints. They had asked simply for an addition to the number of Sub-Commissioners, which was not an unusual demand, because such additions had been made again and again. Most of the excuses given by the Government for not following the usual course were preposterous and ridiculous. The House was told that there was not enough legal talent in Ireland, with 800 practising barristers, to fill 20 or 25 extra Sub-Commissionerships. He remarked that the Solicitor General heard the statement without any reproof. [The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University) dissented.] Did the hon. and learned Gentleman object to the statement?

Mr. MADDEN: It was not made.

Mr. CLANCY said, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated in the plainest language last night that there was a lack of legal talent and ability at the Irish Bar. Whereas the right hon. Gentleman could find any number of Resident Magistrates possessed of legal knowledge to try conspiracy cases under the Coercion Act, which was a much more difficult thing in many cases than deciding points under the Land Act, he could not, forsooth, find barristers sufficiently learned to decide those points, most of which had been decided already. There were two objections to the Bill —first, that it postponed indefinitely the grievance which they lamented. No additional Commissioners could be appointed until the Bill passed, and thus the glut of the Courts would continue. The Chief Secretary for Ireland must be very sanguine, and the First Lord of the Treasury must have great confidence in the power of closure, if they thought this Bill was going through in two or three weeks. A Bill like this, which proposed to fix the constitution of the Land Commission for the next seven years, was a very important Bill, the clauses of which must necessarily attract a great deal of attention and criticism. He anticipated —what with the Local Government Bill, the Financial Scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and all the new versions of the British Constitution with which they were threatened—that the Bill would not get through till the end of the Session. The consequence would be that the glut in the Land Court would increase, and the tenants would be forced to pay rack-rents, with the result which he had stated. The second objection to the Bill was that it would hand over the settlement of cases from the Land Court to the County Courts. To compel the tenants of Ireland to go into the County Courts was to compel them to submit to robbery and confiscation. The House had passed several Land Acts of a beneficial character for Ireland. If the Acts of 1870 and 1881 had been administered in a fair, generous, and impartial spirit the present Irish land crisis would never have arisen. Indeed, he believed that if the Act of 1870 had been properly administered the Act of 1881 would not have been required; and if the Act of 1881 had been administered in the spirit in which it was passed, there would have been no necessity for the Acts of 1882, 1885, and 1887. But the administrators of the Act of 1870, like those of the Act of 1881, killed the Act instead of carrying it out. They were County Court Judges and Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, and they were landlords to a man. A good many of them were subsequently proved to be rack-renting landlords. No wonder that the Acts which they administered proved insufficient to meet the grievances of the tenants. Now it was proposed to go back to the step that was abandoned in 1881, and to hand over the tenants of Ireland to be ground to powder by gentlemen who were, practically, of the same class, and who, although they were first-rate lawyers, were still so imbued with the landlord spirit that they could not possibly be expected to administer the Act in a spirit of fairness. The Land Commission Courts had been chosen by 99 per cent of the tenants in preference to the County Courts, and only two Judges of County Courts had had any considerable number of cases before them. The County Court Judges had been mistrusted by the tenants, and justly so, and yet it was to these gentlemen the tenants of Ireland were to be handed over to be still further robbed in legal fashion. The lay assessors who were to be appointed to advise the Judges would also be landlords' men. He had no confidence either in the promised additions to the strength of the Commission, because so many of the recently appointed Sub-Commissioners had been either rack-renting landlords or their agents. If this Bill was to be the answer to the requests of the tenants and their Representatives to have the Land Commission Courts strengthened, he might say that the idea of a good many tenants would be that the Plan of Campaign would be a very much better invention. The Bill was a fraud on the tenants of Ireland. It was insolent and an outrage, and, in his opinion, it was evidence of the conspiracy entered into between the Government and the landlords of Ireland.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, that his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland had, no doubt knowingly, raised a very large question indeed by the introduction of this measure. It was not a large one altogether from the point of view of the hon. Member who had last spoken, but it was from another point of view. They were placed in some difficulty, because the Chief Secretary, from the exigencies of time on Monday night, was unable to explain fully the object of the Bill and the motives which led him to introduce it. Therefore, in any observations he made he hoped his right hon. Friend would understand that if he was in error in any way it was because his explanation, under the circumstances of last night, was not sufficiently clear or complete. And if he opposed the Bill on insufficient ground, it would be in his power, as he had the right to reply, to enlighten the House more fully as to his measure. He understood the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) to oppose the Bill on two grounds—first, because it would take a long time to pass, and no additional Commissioners could be appointed to revise rents until it was passed; and, secondly, because, as representing the tenantry of Ireland, he did not profess the same amount of confidence in the jurisdiction and administration of the County Courts that he had in the jurisdiction and administration of the Land Commission. Those were two widely different objections, and he had some sympathy with the first, but none with the second. The County Court was, or it ought to be, an excellent tribunal for the determination of disputes about the hiring of land. He had been under the impression that the County Courts gave satisfaction to the mass of ordinary suitors who came before them. Undoubtedly, the County Courts had the advantage over the Courts of the Sub-Commissioners that the County Court Judges were trained lawyers who had had much experience in judicial matters and in litigation of all kinds. A County Court Judge was not picked up haphazard from the Irish Bar, as the exigencies of time or lower political motives might force Party Leaders to select adherents; but he was a man selected by presumed fitness for high judicial duty. Therefore, a County Court ought to be theoretically the best tribunal for the settlement of these land disputes; that being the case, he did not sympathize with the hon. Member's second objection. But for the first objection of the hon. Member there was a great deal to be said. He understood there was a great desire on the part of the tenantry of Ireland to take advantage of the Bill of last year, and this was especially the case with leaseholders. An enormous number of applications for the valuation of land had been filed; and if the peace of Ireland was the first thing they ought to consider, means should be taken to deal with these applications without delay. Obviously, on a Bill of this kind, raising complicated issues, delay must arise before the very difficult, the burning question, of the valuation of land could be settled. On that ground the Chief Secretary for Ireland would do well to consider whether it would not be better to deal expeditiously with the more pressing difficulty of the valuation of rents on the part of the new claimants, the persons who had chosen to avail themselves of the privilege of going into the Land Courts, in order that they might not only suffer no injustice, but, what was equally important, that they might not think they suffered any. The Chief Secretary, by this Bill, had forced the House of Commons to review and re-examine the entire machinery set up by Parliament in recent years for the settlement of the disputes which existed in relation to land in Ireland. That machinery was most complicated, involved, and expensive; and, on the whole, he would say it was a machinery not characterized by sanity or reason, but rather, perhaps, by insanity and unreason. At present there were three separate tribunals for the regulation of the many disputes concerning the hire and sale of land which existed in Ireland, all of which were independent, and some antagonistic to each other. There was, in the first place, the old Landed Estates Court, an admirable institution, and he deeply regretted that that tribunal was not more regarded by Parliament in the earlier land legislation. Having all the machinery of a Court of Law, it cost the country between £12,000 and £15,000 a-year, and yet he believed he was not exaggerating when he said that at the present moment, and for some time past, it had nothing to do, nor was it likely to have anything to do; as a friend had recently expressed it—"Literally the staff of the Court had nothing to do, except to read the newspapers and pass their time in the best way they can." It was set up by Act of Parliament in 1857, he believed, and it was a magnificent machine, but it was perfectly useless. Then there was the Land Commission set up in 1881; and, besides that, there was the Commission for the purpose of purchase set up by the Land Act of 1885. These two Commissions between them cost the country about £110,000 or £112,000 a-year. Now, would it be believed that those two Commissions were unwittingly neutralizing each others' acts? The more the Land Commission worked at the revising of rents, the more Parliament encouraged it to lower rents, the less the Commission for Purchase would have to do; the more the Commissioners of Purchase of Land had to do the less the Commissioners would have to do for the revising of rent, and yet they were keeping those two Commissions alive, and were encouraging them to find work for themselves, although it was obvious to even the meanest intellect that the objects the two tribunals were driving at were hopelessly incompatible with each other. It was worth the notice of the House and the public that these three tribunals cost the country from £130,000 to £140,000 a-year, and that they were independent, and two of them were absolutely antagonistic. The efforts of all this great land machinery had been to reduce the rental of Ireland by some £2,000,000 a-year, he believed, approximately, and it had cost the country over £500,000 to effect that reduction. Was that, he asked, common sense? He submitted it was not. And when the Chief Secretary brought in a Bill which was to add to the existing machinery the House was justified in calling upon the Government to review, not the policy, but the whole system of machinery regulating the dealing with land in Ireland. The Bill proposed to add £300 a-year to the salary of the County Court Judge, and to give him two assistants, who, he supposed, would receive between them close upon £1,000 a-year. The House did not know to what extent this was to apply. Was it to apply to the whole of the County Court Judges in Ireland? If so, there would be no economy, and that could not be intended. On the other hand, all that hon. Gentlemen opposite more directly representing the tenantry asked for was a moderate and temporary addition of six or eight Sub-Commissioners to the existing machinery. He found that there had been a reduction in the number of Sub-Commissioners this year as compared with last year of 15, and he did not gather that the exigencies of the present rush into the Court on the part of the leaseholders demanded a more than temporary addition to the Land Commission of 10 or 12 Commissioners. If he had to choose between such temporary addition and a larger and more permanent addition that was to be made to the staff and salary of the County Court Judges, he preferred the proposal which emanated from the Benches opposite, because when the rents had been valued he imagined that the Commissioners would be dismissed from their appointments; whereas he had no security whatever that if the County Court Judge got an increase to his staff and salary he would readily part with either of those present adjuncts to his appointment. He was disposed to give great credit to the Chief Secretary for introducing this Bill, and for being unwilling to increase the expenses of the Land Commission by the appointment of additional Commissioners; but he should like to see the right hon. Gentleman aiming at a more perfect method of dealing with this great question of machinery for the settlement of land questions. The present measure of the Chief Secretary he did not think was large enough. If the right hon. Gentleman tried to unite the whole of the machinery for land disputes in Ireland into one, to be animated by one mind and one policy, and managed by one staff, whether as regarded the purchase or the valuation of land, that, he thought, would be an object well worthy of his great ability and of all the talent which he had shown in the administration of Irish affairs. That would be a worthy and a great object; but the Bill seemed to him, while recognizing the enormous evil and the absurdity of the present state of things, to afford no adequate relief for that state of things at all. He would much sooner see the more slovenly and less perfect method of Courts continued, and that the Chief Secretary should take time before presenting, as he hoped he would, to Parliament a complete scheme, than that they should have such a Bill as this. The great thing was to put this immense judicial machinery, which cost the country such an enormous sum of money, on something like a final and permanent basis. From the point of view of economy, and not less from the standpoint of the peace of Ireland, he attached great importance to what had fallen from hon. Members opposite. If the Government delayed the settlement of the claims of the tenants by legislation of this kind they might add largely to their difficulties in regard to administration. At the same time, the measure of the Chief Secretary was inadequate to the real evil as regarded the machinery of land litigation in Ireland, and he earnestly trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider it, and before long bring in a Bill to deal with the subject more largely and more permanently.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he did not think the House would be disposed to regret that, by the accident of last night, they had secured a little time for the consideration, not only of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, but of his proposal as embodied in his Bill. If they had secured nothing else, they had, at least, secured the most statesmanlike speech of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill)—a speech which would have its full weight and effect in Ireland. What were the facts of this question? In his speech last night the Chief Secretary for Ireland complained somewhat that for the last four or five weeks Members from Ireland had been pressing the Government upon the block in the Land Courts. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to believe that none of them pressed the Government without being severely pressed themselves. The block in the Land Courts was unquestioned, and there was not a single Member representing an agricultural constituency in Ireland who had not been importuned by his constituents to bring this question before the House of Commons. What was the result of the pressure they had been applying for the last four or five weeks upon the Government of Ireland? The Government proposed to get rid of one grievance by creating a still greater grievance. What was the proposal in the first part of the Bill outlined by the Chief Secretary last night? As things stood now, an Irish tenant, who considered his rent an unfair rent, had the option or the choice of going to the Court of Quarter Sessions before the County Court Judge, or of going to the Land Commissioners' Court. The Bill outlined by the Chief Secretary last night proposed to destroy that option and that choice, and to force a certain number of tenants into whatever Court the Land Commissioners in Dublin thought fit to send them. The Land Commission in Dublin was set up as a kind of Committee of Selection who were to say to one set of tenants "Go here," and they must go, and to another set of tenants "Go there," and they must go; and, if he did not mistake, the end would be that the tenants would resolve to withdraw their originating notices and go nowhere. No one had ever heard him say, since he had had a seat in the House, either in or out of the House, one word calculated to either bring the law into contempt, or to reflect on the administration of the law. He had never used any such language, and he was certainly not going to do so that day. Let them reduce this proposal of the Government to the concrete and see what it meant. He would take the single County of Donegal. Outside the Barony of Raphoe, the County of Donegal was one of the poorest counties in Ireland. Who was the Chairman of that county; who was the County Court Judge? He had had for many years the personal friendship of Dr. Webb, a most brilliant, able, and conscientious lawyer, and, for his part, he should be ready to submit any case of his to Dr. Webb's judgment. But while he was perfectly certain that the County Court Judge in Donegal and the County Court Judges of Ireland generally would bring the utmost conscientiousness to the discharge of any duty they undertook, he asked the House if it was nothing to carry the sentiment of the people with them in the administration of this law? Who was Dr. Webb whom the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would place over the tenantry of Donegal? Dr. Webb was the author of *Confiscation* versus *Contract*. He was, or rather, he was formerly, the brilliant pamphleteer of the Landlords' Committee, and went as near proving as mortal man could prove, that the whole Land Legislation since 1870 had been sheer robbery. Again he (Mr. T. W. Russell) said that, so far as he was personally concerned he was prepared to trust Dr. Webb, and to trust the whole of the County Court Judges of Ireland; but he maintained that the poor peasants in Donegal, and the poor peasants throughout Ireland would simply recognize that their case had been handed over to a landlord's man, and there would be one more grievance planted deep down in the hearts of the people. In all sincerity, and with no bitterness whatever, he asked the Government to pause before they took this step, to look well at what they were doing. Then he came to the question of the assessors who were to sit with the County Court Judge. They were called "Court Valuers." These gentlemen were very old friends. Everybody who had been concerned in the land question in Ireland had heard of Court Valuers over and over again. They appeared first of all about the year 1883 under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), but they were rejected by the House. They appeared in the Bill of last year, but were again rejected by the House. Why did they turn up now? The Chief Secretary for Ireland explained his action last night. He told the House that there was a difficulty in getting competent lawyers. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) should not be in the least surprised if the right hon. Gentleman heard of an indignation meeting in the Hall of the Four Courts to-day. But the right hon. Gentleman also said that there were difficulties in constituting fresh Commissions; that there were Treasury difficulties, and that time would be lost, and delay occur, if the Government were to appoint fresh Commissioners. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) wanted the House to understand what really lay at the bottom of all this. In his opinion, the Sub-Commission Courts — aye, even those chosen by the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—had felt themselves constrained by the circumstances and facts of the case to give very large reductions in rent, and he looked upon this proposal, and the tenantry of Ireland would look upon it, as simply a desperate effort to undo the work of the Sub-Commission Courts. The tenantry of Ireland would look upon this as a stay put upon the proceedings of the Sub-Commissioners, who, in his opinion, had being doing substantial justice all round, no matter what class they had been chosen from. They had not been fixing fair rents in view of family charges and mortgages that had been piled up in the past; they had been fixing fair rents in view of the state of agriculture to-day. He maintained that the tenantry of Ireland would look upon the proposal to hand them over to the County Court Judges, and to these Court Valuers, as a proposal simply to put aside the Sub-Commissioners, and he believed there would be great danger that the tenantry would refuse to go into the Court at all. He could not think that this was a result that the Government could wish to bring about. He said nothing about the peace of Ireland. He stood here to-day to plead for fair play between man and man, and what were they told? They were practically told by this Bill that unless they accepted the proposals regarding the reconstitution of the Land Commission, to which the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had referred—unless they accepted the proposals regarding the reconstitution of the Commission; proposals of the greatest magnitude, proposals of the utmost importance, proposals that would require to be debated for many an hour in the House before they were allowed to pass; they were told that unless they consented to this Bill as a whole, they would not get the part of it which was designed to relieve the block which existed in the Land Court. He thought the Government were committing another mistake in the thorny problem of Irish land legislation, and he could not help saying that he rejoiced that by the accident of last night, at all events, they had got time to discuss the Bill to-day, and that the tenants of Ireland would have time to look the proposals in the face during the Easter Recess. He very much mistook if, when the people in the Province of Ulster and elsewhere knew what was in store for them, this House did not hear of it loudly and strongly after the Easter Recess.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member who has just sat down has attacked with great and, I think, unnecessary bitterness of spirit a proposal which, in the nature of the case, he could only imperfectly understand. The sincere desire of the Government in putting forward that part of the Bill which throws additional work upon the County Court Judges was that great and rapid progress should be made with the cases now pending before the Courts. My noble Friend the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), in his remarks, suggested, while quite recognizing that these arrears should be dealt with, that instead of a plan adumbrated by the Bill we should appoint 10 or 12 additional gentlemen, who should occupy themselves in dealing with these arrears. The plan of the Government is, in my opinion, far more calculated to deal rapidly with this question of arrears. We should have at once the services of 18 competent lawyers, with whom we should constitute 36 lay Commissioners, and they would undoubtedly be able to make extremely rapid progress with the business. But if hon. Gentlemen are so anxious before they see the proposals of the Government in print that they should be rejected, let them not blame me afterwards if the result is that arrears are not so quickly dealt with as they would have been by the Bill that I now propose to the House. The proposal of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), which met with the cheers of hon. Gentlemen opposite below the Gangway, and which, I believe, met with the approval of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), is a small proposal to deal with arrears. The Government proposal is a big proposal to deal with arrears. But, as I have said before, I do not wish to press it wholly without consideration for the views of those who represented the tenantry of Ireland. It is intended in their interests; and if they do not like it I am unwilling to force it down their throats. But I warn them, and the House ought to take the warning, that the result must necessarily be that the arrears will not be as quickly dealt with as under the plan which the Government propose. Let me deal with one aspect of the case, which, I think, is misrepresented by hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member for North Dublin asked what we meant by saying that there were not a sufficient number of legal gentlemen at the Irish Bar, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone, with his lively imagination and vigorous rhetoric, had spoken of an indignation meeting in the Four Courts. For my own part, however, I do not think it likely that what I have said will be so singularly misunderstood in Dublin as it has been by some hon. Members in that House. What I said was that for appointments essentially temporary it was impossible to get such good lawyers to deal with difficult cases as if we went to gentlemen like County Court Judges, who receive large salaries and are appointed for life, and who are the pick of everything in the second flight of the Irish Bar. Can anyone seriously maintain that that could be said of the great mass of those whom he should be able to secure for the temporary work of Sub-Commissioners? I turn to the observations of my noble Friend the Member for South Paddington, which dealt with the second part of our proposals, on which I was hardly able to touch last night. My noble Friend said I was, wittingly no doubt, opening up a very large and important question. My noble Friend is right. I was opening up a large and important question by even touching the Land Courts in Ireland, but it was not by choice that I touched it. My noble Friend is aware that the Land Commission lapses this year.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Yes; quite so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Therefore, it does not rest with the Government to say whether or not we shall touch it. We must touch it; and my noble Friend, who is imperfectly acquainted with our proposals, thinks them inadequate, and that we ought to deal in a larger spirit of reform with the constitution of the Courts which have to do with the land. I will travel thus far with my noble Friend; I will admit that if I had unlimited time at my disposal, if I could ask the House to give many days and nights to the subject, I might propose to deal with the Land Courts as constituted by the Acts of 1881 and 1885 and with the Landed Estates Court in which Mr. Justice Monroe presides. But the time to carry a vast legal scheme of reform is not at my disposal. Everybody knows the important business with which the House will have to deal, and I am therefore obliged to cut down to the narrowest limits the Irish measures which it will be my duty to lay before the House, and it is for that reason that I cannot suggest to the House such a vast plan as my noble Friend would like me to take in hand. But I must inform my noble Friend that the scheme is not so utterly insufficient as he supposes from the inadequate statement made last night. It is perfectly true that I do not propose to touch the Landed Estates Court in which Mr. Justice Monroe is doing such good work. I do not think that Mr. Justice Monroe is leading that life of dignity and ease which my noble Friend supposes. Mr. Justice Monroe will probably differ in opinion from my noble Friend.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he spoke on the highest authority.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: But leaving that Court aside, we do attempt some, as I think, very important reforms in the constitution of the Land Court. That Court consists of two practically independent Commissions. The Act of 1885 has been interpreted by the Land Court as obliging them to hand over the whole work of purchase to the Purchase Commissioners appointed under Lord Ashbourne's Act, and to abstain from any interference with their work. One result of that is that the two divisions of the Court appeared to take opposite sides. The Bill proposes to amalgamate those two Courts into one. We take powers for the Treasury to abolish that part of the Court dealing with the Land Question, supposing their work should come to an end. We do more than that. As the Court is at present constituted Judge O'Hagan, a lawyer of the highest eminence, is obliged to travel about the country dealing with small questions of fact with respect to which his legal knowledge is wholly unnecessary, and the two lay Commissioners spend their time in listening to the discussion of questions of pure law, as to which they are not in theory qualified to give an opinion. The Government propose to give more elasticity to the Court, to enable the lay Commissioners to decide questions of fact not of law, and on important questions of law to associate Judge O'Hagan with a Judge of the High Court, and thus to strengthen the Court which has to do with purely legal questions. At the same time the Government are of opinion that Mr. Justice O'Hagan's great legal acquirements might usefully be employed in dealing with the legal aspect of the questions which come before the Purchase Commission. At present he has nothing to do with it. The Government consider that while they are committing a great waste of time in compelling Mr. Justice O'Hagan to deal with questions of pure valuation, they are also committing a great waste of time in not enabling him to deal with legal questions for which his great competence so well qualifies him. I think, therefore, that though our proposals do not go so far as my noble Friend desires, he will probably be inclined, taking into account the circumstances, to withdraw some of the criticisms which he passed upon the measure I introduced last night, and to admit that the Bill will necessarily cover some of the ground which he desires to see occupied.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that a great deal of what his right hon. Friend had now stated was in addition to what he had said last night. What his right hon. Friend said last night had nothing to do with the Land Court.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My noble Friend is quite right. I got up to make my statement at a quarter to 12, and I was not able to put the whole case for the Bill before the House. What I would respectfully submit, as the best course for the House to adopt, is that the House should allow the Bill to be read a first time and printed. The provisions which it contains, whether hon. Members value them or not, were assuredly not to be condemned unheard. I will not show myself specially obdurate in pressing the details with regard to the Land Commission, but I should like even those details to be seen in print before the House rejects them. Let the Bill be printed during the holidays, and let hon. Gentlemen consider it in a cooler spirit than they have already shown. ["Oh, oh."] I do not wish to hurt their feelings, nor do I see any reason for the violent criticisms they have expressed; but hon. Members opposite have described the Bill as a conspiracy between the Government and the landlords to prevent the tenants from coming into Court.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I never described it as a conspiracy.

Mr. CLANCY: But I did.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone has stated that it was the last despairing effort of the landlord class.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, the right hon. Gentleman totally misunderstood him. What he said was that it was another mistake on the thorny road of land legislation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not further allude to what was evidently a casual rhetorical figure of speech. When the Bill was described as a conspiracy I trembled to think what might occur if the right hon. Gentleman opposite went beyond what was said by the hon. Member below the Gangway. My noble Friend the Member for South Paddington read out from the Estimates certain statements with regard to the Sub-Commissioners now at work. I cannot reconcile those figures with the figures laid before the House last night, and which I have now before me.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR observed that the figures in the Estimates were wrong. They had never been discussed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will read the figures again. In August there were 20 Sub-Commissioners, in September 30, and they continued at 30 to the end of November. The Government then, finding the arrears heavy, raised the number to 50, and at 50 they continued at the present moment. So far, therefore, from the number being fewer it has been raised from 20 to 50. I will now compare the present state of things with what occurred in 1882. I observe that for eight months of 1882 the arrears stood, roughly speaking, at about the same figures as they are now, and the eight months began with a strength of 36 Sub-Commissioners and ended with 51; so that with substantially the same amount of work now the number of the Sub-Commissioners remains substantially the same as in 1882. I think I have now explained to the House some of the things I should have liked to have explained last night. I hope I have, at all events, gone the length of inducing the House to allow the Bill to be printed and considered by hon. Members at their leisure; and I shall not show myself too obdurate on the question of the County Court Judges, if on a sober review of the facts the House holds the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that the great legal talent which is now possessed by the body of County Court Judges should not be utilized for dealing with difficult land cases—cases on which questions of law of such difficulty have arisen that the Superior Court has been largely upset in its arrangements by the number of legal questions it has had to decide. If the House should think that all this legal talent should be wasted, of course I shall raise no serious objection, although I ought to point out to my noble Friend that if that decision is arrived at it will be entirely inimical to those interests of economy and efficiency of which he is so able an advocate. But if the House should decide, in spite of all these considerations, that it would prefer the present system, I am afraid the arrears will not be dealt with so quickly and so effectively as by the plan I propose, but it will not be my business to imperil the other reform which this Bill suggests, and which I hope we shall see carried into law.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, there were two admissions he would at once make. The first was that it would be eminently reasonable, without challenging any Division, which, in point of fact, could not raise the issue fairly between the different opinions entertained in the House, that this Bill should as soon as possible be brought in; the second admission was that it was certainly very unjust to complain of the Government for not making this the occasion of introducing into the whole Land Court system of Ireland all the improvements that possibly it might be susceptible of. In point of fact, that would be to give additional force to the very thing that was complained of—the delay in meeting the great, urgent, and grievous want there was, not only connected with judicial improvements, but connected also with the social order of the country. The difficulty he found in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was that there was nothing whatever in it to show or explain whether, in his opinion, the method the House understood him to propose would be the speediest method of dealing with the accumulation of business. On the face of it, he thought the House was driven to a directly opposite conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to entrust the whole of this business to a body of men very limited in numbers, having much else to do besides this land business. It was quite evident, from the difference of opinion that prevailed in the House, and from the fact that the Irish Members who had spoken appeared to take but one view upon the matter, that, whatever might be the abstract merits of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, there was a great body of opinion directly at variance with him upon a question which seemed to him (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to be all important—namely, the question of providing for the discharge of this business in the most rapid and effectual manner. The choice evidently lay between the plan of the right hon. Gentleman and a large temporary extension of the judicial strength in the shape of Sub-Commissioners, who were already at the command of the Government if they chose to seek them. He apprehended that there could be no doubt that the Government had sufficient material at their command to adopt the latter alternative; quite as much material as Mr. Forster had at the time when he had to encounter still greater difficulties. Having before him in that way the guidance of experience, he had generally felt that the method then adopted was a rapid and effectual method without including the County Court Judges. The House was now asked to believe—although at present the action of the County Court Judges was not excluded, but their collateral assistance was availed of—that to restrict this business to the County Court Judges alone, assisted by valuers, would produce a more rapid settlement of the whole matter than was effected under the former system. It was extremely doubtful, to his mind, how far the use of these valuers would in any way expedite proceedings; but supposing the use of valuers to be necessary, there was no reason why, if the want of valuers was the essential flaw in the present system, a greater amount of assistance in the shape of valuers should not be given. There was before the House a proposal that the Government should proceed by its Executive authority, subject, of course, to the approval of the House, to enlarge very considerably the number of Sub-Commissioners, with a view to extended action, leaving the County Court Judges to render all the assistance in their power, as they had already rendered it. That surely had on the face of it the presumption of being a more rapid and effectual method of proceeding than that of trusting to the County Court Judges alone or limiting the action of the Sub-Commissioners, if not throwing it aside altogether. The appearance of the plan of the right hon. Gentleman for dealing with a matter in reference to which extension was the one thing necessary, not only for the satisfaction of the parties, but also for the social order of the country, was that of a great limitation of the means available for action; and the right hon. Gentleman, although he had explained himself fully and freely on the subject, had not shown that enlarging the powers of the County Court Judges would be so effectual a method as an extension of the number of Commissioners.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University) said, he rose for a moment, in consequence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland having exhausted his right of speaking, to make clear one point which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had raised. This Bill did not in any way propose to do away with the action of Land Commissioners or of the Sub-Commissioners. Whatever might be the merits or demerits of the proposal, it did not in the least interfere with their action. It was merely intended to supplement their action to a very considerable extent, and, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had pointed out, the existing system included the action of the County Court Judge. The County Court Judge was part of the existing system, and he was at present assisted by a valuer; but the employment of a valuer stood on a totally different basis to that of a Sub-Commissioner. There were, therefore, at present two systems—namely, the Sub-Commission and the County Court Judge assisted by a valuer. Without going into the question of the extension of the work of the County Court Judge, so far as the Bill strengthened his position by giving him more competent assistance, he thought that portion of the Bill would commend itself to the judgment of the House. With reference to the observations which fell from the hon. and learned Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy), he (Mr. Madden) should be sorry to listen in silence to any imputation on the Body to which it was the great honour of his life to belong. But he understood the observation of the Chief Secretary exactly in the opposite direction to the interpretation put upon it by the hon. and learned Member. It was not a question as to the ability of the Irish Bar. What the Chief Secretary intended to convey was that it was very doubtful whether it would be possible to get the same class of men to fill the position of Sub-Commissioner, appointed temporarily, as they would to fill the position of County Court Judge; whether it would be possible to get men of position and practice at the Bar to leave that position and practice for an appointment which was temporary. That was the statement in which he acquiesced.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, with reference to the last remark of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he had to remind him that the Government were not confined in their choice of legal members to the Irish Bar, and one of the most respected Sub-Commissioners at this moment was a solicitor. The Government were perfectly able to choose from that branch of the Profession as well as from the Bar. The House wanted to know what was going to be done with reference to the cases now listed. To introduce what would evidently be a severely disputed Bill, was the most extraordinary method of expediting the business they were all desirous to see completed. From the elaborate exposition which the Chief Secretary had given, it was clear that a great amount of discussion would take place upon the Bill, and that its passing through the House would occupy many weeks, without even then entailing any undue discussion, and during the whole of that time the block in the Land Courts would continue to increase. He feared that the Bill, which had been prepared to meet a temporary pressing emergency, had been framed in a way which would prevent it from fulfilling its purpose. Before sitting down he wished to ask whether there was to be any increase of salary for the County Court Judges? If there were, the proposal would have to be discussed fully, for there was a good deal to be said on that subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that by the indulgence of the House he would endeavour to answer the question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As the right hon. Gentleman was aware, each Sub-Commission had at its head a legal gentleman, who received £1,000 a-year. The idea of the Government was, that for that gentleman they could substitute a lawyer, to whom they would certainly not have to pay £1,000 a-year, or anything like it. But they did think that, as much additional work was thrown upon that lawyer, it would be proper that the Treasury should pay him something. He did not read that part of the Bill at all last night, but he casually mentioned £300 a-year. He said that if this heavy work was thrown upon these lawyers £300 a-year would be a fair substitute for the £1,000 which they were now obliged to pay.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, the best thing for the Government to have done would have been to appoint a few additional Sub-Commissioners to help over the glut. He condemned the proposal of the Government to split up the Head Land Commission and allow the two lay Commissioners to run in pairs, whilst the only man of the Chief Commission who had shown sympathy with the tenants was to be put under the shadow of a Judge of a Superior Court, who was never appointed with special fitness for the trial of cases between landlords and tenants. He would warn the Chief Secretary that his proposals were dangerous to the peace of Ireland, because the tenants and their Representatives would not place confidence in County Courts. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had not treated the House fairly in slipping out a few sentences last night, which were apparently of no importance, and then coming down to-day with a proposal which meant handing over to the landlord class in Ireland the hearing of cases between landlord and tenant; but neither the tenants nor their Representatives would permit the right hon. Gentleman to carry the cases wherever he liked. The County Court Judges were the very men who had denounced from the Bench the combination of the tenants, on many occasions, in violent harangues, and yet the Government wished to force the tenants into the Courts of those officials. What would satisfy the Irish Members was the withdrawal of the Bill for a few weeks, and meanwhile the appointment of some additional Sub-Commissioners. If the Government were really desirous for the peace of Ireland, they would listen to the warnings of the Irish Representatives, who made no undue proposals to them. This was a measure that it would take a whole Session to discuss; and if it was the only answer the Government had to make to their modest and peaceful request, it was only mocking them.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, he was sorry to interpose in the debate; but he desired to point out that for weeks and months past there had been a glut in the Land Court. If this Bill was introduced to-day, and considered some time after the holidays, the glut would continue, and there would be no apparent means of relieving it. Though he did not like to oppose the introduction of any Bill, he thought it would be wise for the Chief Secretary for Ireland to withdraw the portion of the measure referring to County Court Judges, and reserve that part dealing with the renewal of the powers of Land Commissioners as a subject for future discussion. Might he be allowed to ask the Chief Secretary to consider one point? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had admitted one objection to the Bill by stating that the tenants had hitherto had power to go to the County Court Judges. There had been this glut in the Land Court, the tenants had complained of it, and yet for all that they had not gone to the County Court Judges. Now the Government were proposing to force the poor tenants to go to the County Court Judges, which, even in the face of the block in the Land Court, they had refused to do. His hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) had referred to the "Court Valuers." In Ireland they had always had a great objection to Court Valuers. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) suggested the appointment of Court Valuers some years ago, he (Mr. Lea) gave to the proposal his strongest opposition. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) very properly said just now, that in matters such as this they must consult the sentiments of the people as well as the facts. The reason of the objection of tenant farmers to Court Valuers was that they had noticed that every time there had been a rise in the rents, it had always been preceded by a visit and a fresh valuation by such valuers. Just now reference was made to Mr. Justice O'Hagan. Might he call the attention of the Chief Secretary to the fact that another member of the Land Commission was also a lawyer. Mr. Litton was an eminent counsel, and had devoted great time and ability to the work of the Land Commission. He (Mr. Lea) hoped that in any reorganization the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would not forget Mr. Litton's devotedness and honesty of purpose.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he hoped that the part of the Bill, whether good or bad, referred to by his hon. Friend (Mr. Lea), would not be withdrawn without substituting something in its place. He thought it would be better to have a systematic and complete machinery such as that existing in India, set up for effecting the object with which the measure was concerned. It would not be expedient to make the County Courts special tribunals for trying a special class of cases, unless they were relieved of their ordinary business. It would be wise, in default of a better arrangement, to withdraw a certain number of County Court Judges from the present sphere of their duties, in order that they might devote themselves exclusively to the work which the Bill would render necessary.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked, whether any steps were to be taken to relieve the glut in the Commissioners' Court during such time as would be occupied in passing the Bill through the House. What did the Government propose to do in case the Bill should not pass?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the Government would consider some scheme for temporarily relieving the block in the Land Courts. He hoped the House would have an opportunity of arriving at a decision on the Bill after it had full knowledge of what it really contained.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, that unless a few additional Sub-Commissioners were appointed, a crisis of very grave importance to the country would be created.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Colonel King-Harman.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 199.]

MOTIONS.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday 5th April.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

COMMONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the Land Commissioners of England, certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the enclosure or regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present Sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power, in respect to each such Provisional Order, to inquire and Report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament; and, if so, whether with or without modification, and in the event of their being of opinion that the same should not be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly with a view to such Provisional Order be remitted to the Land Commissioners.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members, Seven to be nominated by the House and Five by the Committee of Selection.

Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Elton, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Richard Power, and Mr. Wroughton were *nominated* Members of the said Committee, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

VACANT GROUNDS (NUISANCES PREVENTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to prevent Nuisances on Vacant Grounds and Disused Burial Grounds, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. Seager Hunt, and Mr. Howell.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 197.]

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to exempt the Victoria University and the Colleges thereof from the operation of the Act of the ninth year of the reign of George the Second, chapter thirty-six, and to extend the privileges of the Graduates of the said University, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, and Mr. Francis Powell.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 198.]

ADMISSION OF STRANGERS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Admission of Strangers do consist of Nine Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Bartley, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Fulton, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Marjoribanks, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. David Plunket, Sir George Trevelyan, and Viscount Ebrington, with power to send for persons, paper, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [March 26] *reported* and *agreed to.* Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday, 5th April."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked, whether the House was to adjourn at 7 o'clock, or after the Evening Sitting?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that it was usual to adjourn for the Recess after the Morning Sitting.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question with reference to the course of Public Business after the Recess. There was obviously a great deal of work before the House, and much would depend upon the goodness of the arrangements made for the carrying of it on. A great deal of the matter of the Tax Bill would depend upon the judgment given by the House upon the Local Government Bill. With reference to so large and complicated a measure, a considerable number of Members would be desirous of expressing their opinions, and he could not conceive that the former

Bill could be prosecuted without progress having been made with the latter, and should therefore suppose it to be for the general interest to expedite the progress of that Bill as far as possible. When it came forward, so far as he and those near him were concerned, they had a very strong desire to expedite as far as possible the second reading of the Bill, which was fixed for the 12th of April, as well as the stage that would carry the Bill into Committee, so that practical judgments on the various points might be begun to be taken. It would not, he imagined, be possible, to go into Committee until some reasonable interval had elapsed from the second reading. So that hon. Members might have every opportunity of placing Amendments on the Paper; but so far as that stage was concerned, he hoped that no step would be taken in a hostile spirit which would be likely to greatly prolong the proceedings at it. After the second reading, he supposed it would be the desire of the Government to make the proceedings in connection with the Bill as continuous as possible, and to apply their whole strength to dealing with its very important propositions. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he would be good enough to expedite the Return of the number of Agrarian Outrages for the first quarter of the year, so that it might be ready when the House met again. He also asked for a Return showing a comparison between the state of things during the first six months of the Coercion Act and the first six months of the Crimes Act of 1882. He thought it also desirable to extend the Return, so as to give an account of the state of things for the six months preceding the Act of 1882 and an account of the state of things for the quarter which would have expired before they met again.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he would do all he could to expedite the Return first mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman. As to the exact period after the quarter had elapsed when the Return would be presented, he was not able to make a statement. But he would take care that there was as little delay as possible. The other request of the right hon. Gentleman would involve a retrospective and a prospective Return. He thought he could at once say that he would give the prospective extension for the periods after the respective Acts came into operation; but he was not sure whether the materials existed for giving the retrospective Returns.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he thought it was understood on the previous evening that the Resolutions in Ways and Means not previously dealt with should be considered on Monday, the 9th of April. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) would see the necessity of proceeding without much further delay, as important changes in taxation would be effected that ought not to be delayed beyond a reasonable period. The second reading of the Local Government Bill was fixed for Thursday the 12th of April, and it was hoped that the debate would conclude on Friday evening. ["Oh, oh!"] He had reason to hope that, notwithstanding the desire of Members to take part in the debate, with the assistance of the Bill itself, which was in the hands of Members, the debate might be continued, and, if he might make an appeal to hon. Members who had Motions for that day to forego their rights, concluded on Friday, April 13. They proposed to go into Committee on the Bill on Monday, April 23, which would allow an interval of at least a week after the second reading. Having regard to the facts that the Bill was already in the hands of Members, and that there could be no alteration in its character before the second reading, it would be in the power of hon. Members, who would have ample time for the purpose, to prepare such Amendments as they might think desirable. No doubt, the time was rather short, but as the House was prepared to consider the measure in a fair spirit, there was not the same necessity for considerable delay as would exist with regard to a measure which was likely to be hotly contested. He was in the hands of the House, but he hoped the House would go on with the Bill from day to day as nearly as possible, taking Morning Sittings on Tuesdays and Fridays, so as to enable the Bill to be dealt with in a manner worthy of the subject.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he was afraid the natural relief they all felt at the cessation of their labours was, so far as the Irish Members were concerned, largely dashed by the operations of the Government in Ireland. He was sorry to say they always found that there was a great distinction between the action and the policy of the Chief Secretary for Ireland when he had the vigilant eye of Parliament upon him, and his action and policy when Parliament for the moment had disappeared. He did not know whether the habitual self-satisfaction of the right hon. Gentleman enabled him to take a survey of the state of Ireland and the results of his policy, but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) must say that though he had seen many Coercion Acts fail, he did not think there had ever been a failure so profound and abject as that of the present Coercion Act. What was the case of Ireland at present? To a large extent, the right hon. Gentleman had thrown up the sponge. Some of the grossest uses of the Coercion Act had been given up. A short time ago, they had the right hon. Gentleman arresting and imprisoning a number of Members of Parliament on the ground of publishing reports of suppressed branches of the National League. The right hon. Gentleman had ceased to make these prosecutions, and at the present moment the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), the Member for the College Green Division of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), and the Member for South-East Cork (Mr. Hooper) were, in their three newspapers, publishing reports of the very suppressed branches which consigned them to prison a short time ago. Therefore, the House found that this iron Minister of unbending will had already run away from one of the main planks of his campaign. Addressing a meeting at Stalybridge on Saturday last, the right hon. Gentleman asked what measures the Government had ever taken against the liberty of the Press in Ireland? He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) thought that when they put three editors of newspapers in gaol, because of matter they reported in the columns of their newspapers, the Government were certainly interfering with the liberty of the Press. But the right hon. Gentleman had given up that form of attack, and now ran away from formidable enemies with a want of courage that was worthy of considerable reprehension—the right hon. Gentleman now ran away from powerful and formidable enemies and satisfied himself by attacking weak and small enemies. At the present moment there was a man in gaol for selling a copy of *United Ireland*, because that copy happened to contain a report of a meeting of a suppressed branch of the National League. But the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) who published every week of his life *United Ireland*, and circulated 70,000, or 80,000, or 100,000 copies of it, was walking about a free man. This miserable contrast between the terror of the right hon. Gentleman when he met a formidable opponent and his courage when he met a petty enemy was as grotesque a commentary upon his Irish policy as could be well conceived. The other day, speaking on the Arrears Bill, the right hon. Gentleman gave the House to understand, at least he conveyed the impression to the House, that evictions were not going to take place. But the right hon. Gentleman knew as well as any one in the House, and perhaps better, that if evictions did not take place, if multitudinous evictions were not possible, it was not because notices had not to the number of 4,000 or 5,000 been served on the tenants of Ireland. Why did not evictions take place? Was it because the landlords were merciful? Was it because the right hon. Gentleman had any sympathy with the tenants? In his (Mr. T. P. O'Connor's) experience he never heard of a Minister so callous to the sufferings of the tenantry of Ireland as the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary. If evictions were not to take place, it was because the right hon. Gentleman's heart had failed him, and because he knew that coercion had failed. If the right hon. Gentleman were to carry out the Coercion Act in the "Bombastes Furioso" manner in which he put it in force a few months ago, when Parliament was not sitting, he would require the whole *Corps d'Armée* to enable him to do so. What had the right hon. Gentleman done with regard to suppressed branches? If any one wanted to find the parts of the country in which the National League was strongest and most vigorous both in spirit and organization they would find that they were the very places where branches had been what was called "suppressed." The right hon. Gentleman amused the House by the statement that meetings did not take place at all. That was very curious if true, but unfortunately "if true" was a proviso applicable to a large number of statements made by the right hon. Gentleman. What happened when branches of the League were suppressed in County Clare? Meetings of the branches took place periodically and they were reported in the newspapers, and yet the right hon. Gentleman came down to the House and explained that the meetings did not take place at all. But at the very moment he was making that statement Colonel Turner was going about threatening the people with police attacks because meetings took place. He left it to Colonel Turner and the right hon. Gentleman to settle the delicate question of veracity between themselves. With regard to the rest of Ireland the right hon. Gentleman had not even made an attempt to deal with the branches of the National League. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not done so, because his action had a most invigorating effect upon the League. The right hon. Gentleman was a most able and most useful coadjutor of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington), who was the Secretary of the National League. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman was as much the Chief Secretary of the National League as he was the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Now, he passed from the general policy of the right hon. Gentleman to one of the particular instances of that policy with which they had been favoured within the last few days. A meeting was called for last Sunday in the town of Youghal. He did not think a meeting was ever called for a more legitimate purpose; he did not think that there was ever a meeting called under circumstances of greater legality. What was the position of the district in the midst of which Youghal lay? The tenants on the Ponsonby estate were in a certain proportion leaseholders, and the right hon. Gentleman having purloined the Bill which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) produced, brought in a Bill last year, and passed it through Parliament, giving the leaseholders the same rights to go into Court as non-leaseholders. When the Bill was passing through Parliament a certain number of landlords endeavoured to filch from the tenants the rights which even their own friends in Parliament provided for the tenants. He would not go over again the story of the Mitchelstown estate, which was eloquently told them by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. He only mentioned it to note the fact that the leaseholding tenants on the Mitchelstown estate were running a race with the landlord to see whether the eviction or the Land Court would first be reached; the landlord trying to effect an eviction in order to get the tenants out of Court, and the tenants trying to reach the Land Court before evictions were realized. He did not think that anybody would ever forget the impression made on the House of Commons when the hon. Member for North-East Cork said he might in his advice to his tenants have been guilty of a technical illegality, but he felt bound to give the advice just as he would feel bound to stay the hand of an executioner when he knew that a reprieve was at the door. That striking and picturesque figure of speech described the case of the Ponsonby estate as well as the Mitchelstown estate; in fact, that figure of speech did not adequately describe the facts of the Ponsonby estate, for the very reason that the reprieve was not only at the door, but actually in the hands of the unfortunate beings whom the landlords sought to execute. What was the state of the case? The leasehold tenants on the Ponsonby estate had sent in notices to the Land Court, asking to have their rents revised. If the rents of the leasehold tenants on the Ponsonby estate be just and fair rents, why should the landlord have any objection to being brought before the Court? The Land Court would confirm the rents if fair, and would raise them if they were too low. But what occurred! When the tenants sent in notices to the Land Court, asking for a revision of their rents, the landlord then, and then for the first time, sent to the tenants notices of eviction. When the House was discussing the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman last Session, the right hon. Gentleman in his usual lofty manner, and with the hauteur of his ignorance, ridiculed the idea of men being evicted by the silent agency of registered letters. The right hon. Gentleman assured them that such an agency could not be largely employed, but, as a matter of fact, landlords all over Ireland were making far more use of the section of the Act which admitted of eviction notices being sent by means of registered letters than of any other section of the statute. The landlord on the Ponsonby estate or his representative sent notices of eviction by registered letter. The result was that the tenants lost their status and the Land Court was unable to hear their case or to revise their rent. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether he thought it was fair or decent on the part of the landlords thus by a side wind to attempt to filch the tenants of their right to have their rents revised. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not deny that the landlord was within his legal rights in taking this course, but he maintained that the landlord, or any other person who would stand by the strict letter of the law in a country like Ireland, was a disturber of the law and was a disturber of the order of the country. It was true that disputes had been going on between the landlord and the tenant of the Ponsonby estate; but surely, if the landlord were a wise man, he would not say a generous man, but a wise and discreet man, he would have seized eagerly the opportunity of making peace between himself and his tenants which the notices to the Land Court presented. If these cases had been heard by the Land Court, they would have been taken as test cases by the tenantry on other estates. He was sure other tenants would have been willing to pay to Mr. Ponsonby or his representative a rent exactly equal in proportion to the rent fixed by the Land Court, and therefore Mr. Ponsonby or his representative would have best served the interest of the estate by allowing the cases to be heard, and allowing the rest of the estate to be adjudged and tested by them, apart from serving the interest of the tenants and the peace of Ireland. He was not speaking without precedent. What took place on the neighbouring estate at Mitchelstown? A certain number of tenants went into the Court; the judgment given in a few cases was accepted by the rest of the tenants, and the result was that the landlord and tenants were on thoroughly amicable terms. Evictions had ceased, disturbances, if disturbances there were, were now avoided, and Mitchelstown was one of the parts of the country which would give less trouble to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the landlord of the district than many other districts. If the excellent example of Mitchelstown had been followed on the Ponsonby estate, peace and tranquillity and kindly feeling would prevail instead of the bitter relations which now existed. Did anyone suppose that Mr. Ponsonby did not know this? He was sure Mr. Ponsonby was as convinced as he was that the very best course he could have taken would have been to accept the offer of the tenants, to allow the cases to go into Court, and let the remainder of the tenants abide by the result. Unfortunately Mr. Ponsonby was not a free agent. Behind Mr. Ponsonby stood the Cork Property Defence Union. The Union were taking the estate over from Mr. Ponsonby. Mr. Ponsonby, in a letter he wrote, declared very pathetically that he had ceased to be a free agent. Was the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who was so extremely anxious for the absolute liberty of every individual in Ireland, going to take any steps to relieve Mr. Ponsonby from the duress and coercion put upon him by the Cork Property Defence Union, because it was quite evident from Mr. Ponsonby's own admissions that if it were not for the coercion of this Union, he would have been willing to make terms with the tenants. What was the Cork Property Defence Union? He would not call it a gang of landlords, because that would be disrespectful language; but he would call it a body of landlords who were fighting the tenants not on their own estates, but on estates which did not belong to them. The hon. Member for South Huntingdon (Mr. Smith-Barry) was the head and front of the Cork Property Defence Union, and it was understood he supplied most of the funds of the Union. He would like to put a question to the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman supported the Cork Property Defence Union, and the Union compelled or advised Mr. Ponsonby to hold out against the tenants, and not to give fair reductions. Did the hon. Gentleman adopt that course with regard to his own tenants? Did he refuse them fair reductions, or was it not the fact that the hon. Gentleman himself had made large reductions? He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had been told the hon. Gentleman had given as large as 30 per cent reductions. If the hon. Gentleman had made large reductions to his own tenants, two questions arose. The first question was, how was it that large reductions were just in his case and not just in the case of the tenants of other landlords? The second question was, if the hon. Gentleman had not given the abatements on account of their justice, but because of being afraid to fight his tenants, what kind of courage was it on his part to compel other gentlemen to fight their tenants? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary spoke about every person being allowed to do exactly what he wanted without pressure from anybody else. Why did he allow the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire to use pressure through the Cork Property Defence Union to prevent landlords coming to terms with their tenants? Was such pressure as the hon. Gentleman exercised calculated to conduce to the peace of Ireland? The hon. Member was the greatest offender against the peace, for the pressure he exercised upon others was a most fruitful source of disturbance. Such being the relations between landlord and tenants on the Ponsonby estate, a meeting was called for last Sunday. That meeting was announced two or three weeks ago. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was aware of that fact or not; but certainly if he was not, he was about the only Gentleman who followed Irish affairs who was not. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether, if he was going to proclaim a meeting, it would not be a great deal more decent on his part, as well as much better for the peace of Ireland, that he should give notice of the proclamation in due time. He did not suppose the right hon. Gentleman ever read any of the history of Ireland; but if he would favour the people of that country, over whom, unhappily, he at present exercised some influence, by devoting some little of his large mind to the study of their annals, he would find there was nothing which had caused more exasperation, or had more frequently imperilled the peace of Ireland, than the very policy he was now pursuing—the policy of retarding the proclamation of meetings. He did not suppose the right hon. Gentleman ever heard of the meeting at Clontarf in 1843, a short time before they had the happiness of having the right hon. Gentleman amongst the inhabitants of this earth; but that meeting, although it was known for several weeks before that it was intended to be held, was not proclaimed until the Saturday, the day before the meeting was to be held. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) would tell the right hon. Gentleman that the shortness of the notice very nearly produced a great massacre of people at that meeting. Well, the Chief Secretary, knowing for weeks that the meeting at Youghal was going to be held, did not proclaim it until five o'clock on Saturday evening. That was an invitation to the people to come there; it was an incentive to a collision between the people and the authorities. It was the most skilful preparation that could be made, if the right hon. Gentleman had such a terrible wish in his mind. Were they asking too much of the right hon. Gentleman when they requested that when again he proclaimed a meeting, he would at least proclaim it in time, and not a few hours before the people round the country side started for the place of rendezvous. He (Mr. O'Connor) was, he thought, justified in making this observation, that of all the astounding proclamations that ever broke up a meeting, even in Ireland, there never was a more astounding one than that which broke up the meeting at Youghal. It was not issued until five o'clock on Saturday evening, and the precious Resident Magistrate used in it words to the effect that it had been represented to him, being a Justice of the Peace in the County of Cork, by an information duly sworn, that a number of people would meet or assemble at or near Youghal; and that the object and effect of such meeting would be to lead to dissension or animosity between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects, and consequent breach of the peace. How could they have dissension in Youghal?

As a matter of fact, the people there were all of one mind. They could not produce animosity or difference of opinion amongst people who were all of the same opinion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would not find in Youghal a score of people who disagreed with the rest of the community on the subject of his policy, for they were practically unanimous in its condemnation. The right hon. Gentleman declared that the meeting would have had the effect of leading to dissension and creating animosity. The meeting would have done nothing of the kind. It was the policy of the Government which had led to dissension. The meeting would have had the effect of presenting to the landlord a united tenantry—and he (Mr. O'Connor) believed that to have a united tenantry facing a landlord was the best means of avoiding dissension in Ireland. Well, the meeting was proclaimed, and he could not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on his selection of an instrument for carrying out his work, unless his object had been to select the very worst possible instrument. Amongst all the Resident Magistrates in Ireland, whom had the right hon. Gentleman selected to carry out the work? Why, none other than Captain Plunkett. No Chief Secretary who was anxious to preserve the peace of Ireland would have sent to a meeting of this kind, and on an occasion of this kind, so unfitted a person by his personal character and his antecedents, to appease and tranquillize the minds of the people with whom he had to deal. The Chief Secretary selected the man who, above all others, was a torch amongst the inflammatory elements of disturbance in Youghal. What was the history of Captain Plunkett? He was the hero of the telegram—"Don't hesitate to shoot them." A more cold-blooded, a more foul, a more ruffianly telegram was never sent by any official in that part of the world in any crisis of Irish history. What was the first duty of a magistrate, even in the face of peril, to the public peace? Why, not to shoot without hesitation, but to hesitate as long as he could against the shedding of human blood. Any Resident Magistrate who knew his business, in place of telgraphing "Don't hesitate to shoot," would have telegraphed "Hesitate to shoot until such an awful emergency arises as will compel you to resort to that terrible means of preserving the peace." Captain Plunkett was the hero of that famous telegram "Don't hesitate to shoot," a telegram which had certainly done excellent service in defeating Tory candidates at bye-elections in this country. And that telegram had been sent, of all places in the world, to that very town of Youghal; but that was not the only association in the past between Captain Plunkett and the town of Youghal, for some time ago a young man named Hanlon was killed in some disturbances which took place there. He (Mr. O'Connor) would not go into the circumstances in which this young man's life was taken, but everyone knew that the feeling in Youghal was that the young man's life was sacrificed by Captain Plunkett; yet this man who was regarded in the district in that light, and who was the author of the telegram to which he had referred, was of all other men the one selected to preserve the peace of Youghal. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) gave the Chief Secretary and Captain Plunkett an easy opportunity of at once carrying out their proclamation and preserving the peace. His (Mr. O'Connor's) hon. Friend did not say, "We will hold this meeting in spite of you." What he said was, "We will assert our right to get into the place of meeting, but if you use force to prevent us we will submit quietly, and have the question tried in the Courts of Law." That took place in Ireland, but he (Mr. O'Connor) should call this an eminently English way of settling a matter of this kind. It was the course adopted by Mr. Saunders, lately Member for East Hull, in regard to a meeting in Trafalgar Square. Mr. Saunders had gone to the Square, made his speech, allowed himself to be arrested, and then allowed the Government of the day to bring him into Court in order that the matter might be settled in an English, constitutional method in the Courts of the country. The Member for North-East Cork adopted that view, and surely no step could have been taken more calculated to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if his desire was to follow the English system. The hon. Member for North-East Cork approached the place where the police were; he kept the crowd back, so anxious was he to avoid even the appearance of disturbing the peace. There was a considerable space between the Member for North-East Cork and the crowd, as the hon. Member wanted to avoid giving even the semblance of an excuse to the magistrates for interrupting the meeting. He said, "I am going to hold this meeting—arrest me, commit a technical assault on me, and we will have the case tried in the Law Courts." If that had happened, the hon. Member would have turned round to the crowd and have asked them to disperse. He would have said, "I will try this case not by armed collision between you and the police, but in a Court of Law, and let a Court of Law decide between you and the police." He (Mr. O'Connor) asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to point out a more peaceful and legal method of deciding between him and the people of Youghal. But legal and peaceful methods did not suit the right hon. Gentleman and his Government of "law and order." Of all methods, those which were antagonistic to the right hon. Gentleman were those which were legal and orderly. Well, what took place! Captain Plunkett, in his usual braggadocio style, said—"You must take the consequences," and did not arrest him. He sent detectives around, and before a word of anger had been spoken on one side or the other, or a blow had been struck, one of these detectives struck the horse which was harnessed to the car on which the hon. Member for North-East Cork and Canon Keller were standing. Everybody who was at all well acquainted with an Irish jaunting car must know that at any time a standing position in one of them was an extremely unsafe position to be in, and that if this detective had wished to imperil the lives of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork and Canon Keller, he could not have adopted a better course. The man struck the horse—a piece of wanton brutality which ought to have disgusted even Captain Plunkett and the Chief Secretary—and the result was that the crowd got excited, and Captain Plunkett got separated from his men and was assaulted. He (Mr. O'Connor) had seen descriptions of the injuries inflicted, and as a Christian, he must say he was sorry for them; but at the same time it must be evident to all, that Captain Plunkett had brought them on himself by his brutal behaviour. If he had taken the course pointed out by the hon. Member for North-East Cork, the people would have dispersed quietly, and he himself would have been able to go safely to his home, and that course would have been a better one in the interests of law and order, though it might not have so well pleased the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He (Mr. O'Connor) did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was going to take proceedings against the Member for North-East Cork, but he did not think he would be so bold, since that hon. Member had become better known to the House and to the country than he had been. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would rather be inclined to run away from a prosecution, just as he had run away from the hon. Member's speech in that House, now that he knew that behind the Member for North-East Cork there were millions of English hearts who loved him as dearly as his own countrymen. The Chief Secretary had a few broken heads to his credit, and had bludgeoned a few people; but if that was his way of tranquillizing Ireland and making its people hug the idea of the Union, he (Mr. O'Connor) must say that if he and his Friends on that side of the House were Unionists, they would regard the Chief Secretary as the deadliest enemy of their cause, and if they were landlords they would regard him also as their deadliest enemy. They had within the last few days heard several speeches from the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). He would not ask that hon. Member to say all he had in his mind, but he knew that if he did say all he had in his mind he would say that, in his opinion, the policy most menacing to the Unionist cause in Ireland, and especially in Ulster, was the policy of the Chief Secretary with regard to the Land Question. [Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.): Hear, hear?] The Chief Secretary was estranging the tenants and ruining the landlords of Ireland, and let them look at the picture he had given them of the condition of the landlords. The Chief Secretary had given them a Jeremiad instead of a pæan over the result of his policy upon them. All he had to say was to beseech for mercy on behalf of these landlords for whom he had been using coercion so savagely for months past. He (Mr. O'Connor) was not at all sorry to have the right hon. Gentleman in his present position instead of the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks Beach), for the latter would have been a much more dangerous opponent. Such speeches as he made and the general policy of the present Chief Secretary in Ireland was calculated to put an early end to the present unhappy struggle.

MR. SMITH-BARRY (Hunts, S.) said, he should not have taken any part in this discussion if it had not been for a remark of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). In speaking of the Ponsonby estate, the hon. Member had made an attack on the Cork landlords, and more especially on himself (Mr. Smith-Barry), as head of an association known as the Cork Defence Union. He would tell the hon. Member—if he did not know it before—that that Defence Union was not an association of landlords at all. It was an association composed of all sorts and different classes of men, merchants, farmers, and landlords, and was in no sense a purely landlords' organization. He would tell the hon. Member, further, that the Cork Defence Union had not, and never had had, control over or management of the Ponsonby estate. That estate had from the beginning been under Mr. Ponsonby's own control. If it were not under Mr. Ponsonby's own control now, it certainly was not under the control of any association in the county of Cork. The hon. Member had made an attack on the landlords of the county of Cork and on himself (Mr. Smith-Barry) for instigating Mr. Ponsonby to exact such terms from his tenants as he himself would not ask, and as other landlords in the county of Cork would not venture to exact. He would like to tell the hon. Member, as he appeared to be somewhat out in his facts, that he noticed last night in a newspaper the hon. Member probably might have seen—an evening newspaper called *The Star*—an article entitled "Mr. O'Brien Interviewed," in which a good many of the facts stated by the hon. Member just now appeared, and that those facts were entirely out of accord with the true circumstances of the case. In the first place, with regard to Mr. Ponsonby—whom, he might say, was one of the most honourable and kindest-hearted gentlemen that he ever had the honour of meeting, a gentleman who was as anxious as anyone possibly could be to do what was right and just to his tenants if they would let him—that gentleman possessed an estate in the county of Cork, the Poor Law valuation of which was about £7,000 a-year, and the rental of which was somewhere under £8,000. The Poor Law valuation in that part of the country, as everyone acquainted with the South of Ireland knew, was a high valuation, and the rental was by no means an excessive one. Mr. Ponsonby had been giving a reduction to his tenants for some years past, and he offered them 18 months ago, when they first put the Plan of Campaign on him, 20 per cent reduction on the old rents—the non-judicial rents—and 10 per cent on the rents judicially fixed. The tenants themselves demanded 35 per cent reduction on the old rents and 20 per cent on the judicial rents. The hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) wished to compare those terms with those he (Mr. Smith-Barry) was at that time giving. He certainly was not giving, nor had he at any time given, such reductions as those, nor did he know of any landlords in the South of Cork, or in the South of Ireland, who would have volunteered such terms as Mr. Ponsonby was asked to give. These rents had never been raised in the memory of man. They were old rents, which had been paid regularly by the tenants for generations, and for seven years up to the time when the Plan of Campaign was put on Mr. Ponsonby, 18 months ago, not more than half-a-dozen evictions had taken place. He did not wish to detain the House. This was somewhat in the nature of a personal explanation. He was not prepared to address the House this evening, but he would say this—that the landlords of the County of Cork, and, as far as he knew, the landlords of the whole of Ireland, had been and were only too anxious to meet their tenants in any fair and reasonable manner. The landlords of the county of Cork, some weeks previous to the Plan of Campaign being put on Mr. Ponsonby, held a meeting and declared themselves anxious to do everything they could to meet the fair requirements of the time. The vast majority of them had acted on that principle.

Mr. Ponsonby, who, as he had shown, had offered fair terms, had also given his agent instructions, in any special case where the circumstances demanded it, to grant a special reduction beyond that which he had already promised. In making these few remarks he hoped he had vindicated the honour of his friend Mr. Ponsonby and the landlords of the county of Cork. He would say again that Mr. Ponsonby had endeavoured over and over again to get this matter settled if it could possibly be settled, and the reason why it had not been settled was that the demands of the tenants, or, rather, not of the tenants themselves, but of their advisers, Canon Keller and the hon. Member for East Cork, who had been instrumental in getting the Plan of Campaign adopted in the district, had been so exorbitant that it had been impossible to concede them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gave way just now to my hon. Friend the Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry), in order that he might reply to the personal attack just made upon him; and I think the House will be pleased with the brief, clear, and manly statement with which he defended not only himself, as an Irish landlord, but all the other landlords that have been aspersed by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool. But the hon. Member has not contented himself with an attack on my hon. Friend and on the Cork Defence Association; but he has gone in his usual style into topics concerning the government of Ireland. As I have no objection to his treating these subjects, neither do I object to the style in which he has chosen to do so; because never, in my wildest moments, did I expect that the hon. Member would show good taste or fairness in criticizing either the Government or myself. But I think that it would have been well if he had, before attacking the Government, and myself in particular, made up his mind as to the exact line which he intended to take. It appeared to me that in his speech he hesitated between two different lines of criticism. In one part of his speech he wished to assert that the Government were too violent, and then he turned round and desired to show that we are not now so violent in our policy in Ireland as we have been, because, as it seems, we are terrified by such speeches as that which he has just delivered. I can assure the hon. Member that so far as we are concerned on this side of the House, against whom those speeches are directed, they have not the slightest effect in inspiring terror. The hon. Member in the course of his speech proceeded to criticize the conduct of the Government in Ireland last winter in interfering, as he declared, with the liberty of the Press. The hon. Member went further, and said that he was very much horrified at my audacity, that in a speech I made elsewhere—at Stalybridge, on Saturday night—I had not refuted that accusation. What I stated on Saturday night with reference to the accusation of interfering with the liberty of the Press was that during the debate on the Address, no responsible Member had got up in his place and asserted that the statement was true; for if such a charge could be made and sustained against a Minister, it was one of the most formidable that could be advanced. How does the hon. Member attempt to fill up the gap left by the Home Rule orators who spoke in the debate on the Address? He stated that certain persons had been put in prison for publishing notices of prohibited meetings. Does the hon. Member know what the freedom of the Press really means? The liberty of the Press in this country is the right which enables a person to publish what opinions he likes, and defend them by such arguments as he hopes may influence the minds of others. That is the liberty of the Press, and that is a liberty which the Government has never interfered with in Ireland. We thought, in order to carry out the action of the Executive with regard to suppressed branches in a proclaimed district, it was necessary to prosecute certain gentlemen connected with Irish newspapers. We did so, and I am sorry if hon. Gentlemen should have been put to any suffering or inconvenience; but I am bound to say that these prosecutions have had the most salutary effect, and have carried out the object for which the Government initiated them. The hon. Gentleman went on to state that the League which was flourishing all over Ireland, was most flourishing in the proclaimed districts, and that meetings were being published in defiance of the law by various newspapers. But the Press prosecutions were instituted for a particular object—the effectual suppression of the League in these districts which we had proclaimed—and so long as that object is attained, we are not concerned with anything else. That object is thoroughly attained. The hon. Gentleman appeared to think there was a division of opinion between me and Colonel Turner on this subject. As a matter of fact, my information on this subject is chiefly derived from correspondence with Colonel Turner. The League may practically be said to be a thing of the past over Clare and those parts of Cork in which the branches have been suppressed. ["Oh, oh!"] I am perfectly aware that we do see bogus reports of imaginary meetings reported in the Nationalist Press; but we know—it is not a question of conjecture, but a question of fact—that those reports are absolutely written out by the ex-secretary of the branch in his own private room, sent to the newspapers, and then published as indicating what is going on. But, considering that the names of the gentlemen taking part in the meeting are known to the police, and that their movements are watched on the day the meetings are said to have taken place, it is not a matter of conjecture, but a matter of demonstration that the report of the meeting has no more foundation in fact than the majority of the statements which appear in the Irish Press. But not only are the reports of these meetings purely imaginary, but even the imaginary reports have altered in their tone. That is a circumstance which should prove interesting to hon. Gentlemen who are curious to watch the development of affairs in Ireland since last August. I do not know whether the House recollects that it was my duty, when certain districts were to be proclaimed, to prove that the National League was a dangerous association, by reading out a large number of reports of meetings of the branches from different parts of the country inserted in different newspapers which were of an intimidatory character, and which mentioned by name obnoxious individuals who were subject to the tyrannical action of the League. The House, or that portion of the House which is interested in the maintenance of law and order, will be glad to learn that that form of report has almost entirely disappeared from the Irish Press. The result of our action has been to enormously improve the character of the reports of those meetings, whether reports of meetings in suppressed districts or real meetings in other districts. It has tended largely to remove from them the stain of being the instruments of intimidation directed against special individuals. That is a satisfactory sign of the improved condition of the country. Then the hon. Gentleman went on to denounce as a peculiarly atrocious example of the action of the Government the proclamation of the meeting at Youghal on Sunday. The hon. Gentleman entered a good deal into the condition of Mr. Ponsonby's property; and, oddly enough, though he dealt at great length with that matter, not a single word fell from him which would have given anyone to understand, who was not already acquainted with the facts, that the Plan of Campaign has been practised on that estate for nearly two years. The hon. Member spoke of the strained relations existing between landlord and tenant; but he did not give any indication that the tenants on the Ponsonby estate—an estate managed with great liberality, judgment, and generosity—had been deliberately engaged in an illegal conspiracy against the landlord for nearly two years, during which time they had not paid 1*s.* of rent. The meeting was thus called on an estate in which the Plan of Campaign was in force, and by the man who, of all others, had made himself notorious in connection with the Plan of Campaign. Perhaps the House is not aware that the hon. Member for North-East Cork has not been seen for the first time on this occasion on the Ponsonby estate. They are not perhaps aware that the hon. Member, who, I think, told us in a speech that only on one occasion did he counsel resistance on the part of the tenants to the law, did counsel the tenants on the Ponsonby estate to resist by violence the process of the law, and advised them to take as an example for their conduct the notorious instance of Saunders' Fort—one of the most flagrant cases of deliberate and protracted resistance to the Sheriff and his officers which even the recent history of Ireland can furnish. I apprehend, when the House takes these facts into account, it will probably entertain no doubt that the Executive would have been failing in its duty had it omitted to prohibit this meeting from being held, and to disperse it if an attempt had been made to hold it in defiance of the proclamation. What is the avowed excuse given for the meeting? It is to protest, as far as I understand it, against the action of the landlord in preventing his tenants coming into Court to have a fair rent fixed. I wish the hon. Gentleman, when discussing this question, had explained to the House by what legal precess it was possible for the landlord to prevent his tenants going into Court. [AN IRISH MEMBER: By eviction notice.] If a tenant is turned into a caretaker it is no doubt true that he loses the privileges conferred by the Act of 1881, which are only given to tenants. But there are certain preliminary stages to be gone through before a tenant is turned into a caretaker. The hon. Gentleman led us to believe that the tenants in question had been leaseholders.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Some of them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think they were not; but it is not material. Whether leaseholders or tenants from year to year, no action that the landlord could possibly take would deprive them of the right of going into Court and having a fair rent fixed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): What is the effect of arrears in that case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Arrears are not the point in question. The hon. Gentleman has raised a different issue. It is not pretended that on account of accumulation of arrears, the tenants were prevented from going in Court. The accusation is that they were turned into caretakers, and, consequently, precluded from going into Court. With regard to arrears, I will point out that those people, had they thought themselves aggrieved, at any stage of the preliminary proceedings, would have had the power not only of going into Court to have a fair rent fixed, but of asking the County Court Judge to give a stay of execution on the proceedings to evict them until a fair rent had been fixed for them by the action of the Court, and no action of the landlord could deprive them of the power of going into Court. Is there any evidence that this request for stay of execution was made, or that the request was refused? If there is not, does it not show that they had no case? The hon. Gentleman next says that the proclamation of the meeting came too late. But I gather that, however late the proclamation may have been, it gave ample time to the hon. Member for North-East Cork to make a written communication to Captain Plunkett respecting it. If that hon. Member had obeyed the proclamation, he could have prevented a not very creditable scene which, in consequence of his resistance, took place on Sunday. The hon. Gentleman also raked up the incorrect and oft exploded version of the telegram sent by Captain Plunkett with regard to the riots at Youghal. The hon. Member interpolated a sarcasm to the effect that that telegram had done a great deal to cause the Conservative Party to lose so many bye-elections. We have not lost so many bye-elections after all; but I will not go into that point. I would, however, ask the hon. Member, if it be granted that this telegram produced such an effect on constituencies in England, whether it was a true description of what the telegram was and of the circumstances under which it was issued that produced that effect, or was it the utterly incorrect and imaginative version which the hon. Gentleman gave of it in this House, and which I know was repeated in newspapers and on platforms in order to inflame the public mind against one of the most honourable, most distinguished, and most courageous public servants that the Government of the country possesses? ["Oh, oh!"] No man in this world is more anxious than Captain Plunkett to prevent the shedding of blood. ["No, no!" *from the Home Rule Members.*] But Captain Plunkett is aware, as every other man who has ever been responsible for this kind of transaction is aware, that the first condition of maintaining peace and averting the effusion of blood is to say that in case of absolute necessity violence will be resisted by violence. And I have more than once before pointed out to the House that the result of this telegram was, that a mob which might have become dangerous both to themselves and to the police, were managed and dispersed without any bloodshed or destruction of life. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members interrupt me apparently under the impression that the loss of life at Youghal was due to the telegram. But even in Ireland the effect cannot precede the cause. And unless my memory deceives me, the unfortunate man Hanlon was shot before the telegram was sent by Captain Plunkett; and I think that will not be contradicted now that I have given hon. Gentlemen an opportunity of recollecting the facts of the case. I think I have now dealt at as much length as the case deserves with all the circumstances of the proclamation of the meeting at Youghal. I have shown that we were well advised in proclaiming the meeting. I have shown that the circumstances of the Ponsonby estate made the meeting illegal. I have shown also, in my observations with regard to the influence of the National League generally and to its suppression in the proclaimed districts, that no man either in this country or in Ireland who is really anxious for the maintenance of law and order can be otherwise than satisfied with the course which the Government have taken or the policy which they have found it necessary to pursue.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, he did not desire to take part in the debate which had been going on, as he believed the Question Mr. Speaker had put before the House was a much more interesting one —namely, "That this House do on its rising adjourn until April 5th;" but the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had made a statement soon after that Question was proposed, against which he (Sir Joseph Pease) desired to put in a *caveat*. The right hon. Gentleman was so sanguine as to imagine that the Local Government Bill would be brought up for second reading on Thursday, and that the second reading debate would terminate on Friday. He (Sir Joseph Pease) thought it would be paying a poor compliment to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) if a Bill of such a complicated character, and with which the right hon. Gentleman had taken such great pains, were passed over in such a slighting a manner. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to say whether, on reflection, he really thought that the Bill could be debated on second reading in the course of two nights? It contained questions which would rouse all their temperance Friends in the House and the country Gentlemen, and it would raise questions as to local divisions and local government. Whilst they all desired to get into Committee on the Bill and to make progress with it as fast as they reasonably could, the sentiments of those Members of the House who would be likely to desire to speak could hardly be expressed, even if those Members exercised the greatest restraint over their loquacity, in two nights. He merely wished, as he had said, on the part of many Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House, to enter a *caveat* against the too sanguine estimate of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman rose, he wished to say that when they suggested that the time proposed by the right hon. Gentleman was too short, they did not mean that the time allowed between the introduction of the Local Government Bill and the second reading was too short, but that the second reading debate would be prolonged beyond the two days he had estimated. No doubt, they would be glad on all sides if two nights were found to suffice. He (Mr. Mundella) rose to ask when the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take the second reading of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill; because, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, until they had had the discussion on the second reading the Grand Committee could not commence its labours?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: There is no desire on the part of the Government to unduly press forward the Local Government Bill; but, inasmuch as the general principle of the measure has been practically accepted with almost practical unanimity, although there are points and details which may properly be raised for discussion at length in Committee, I should hope that we shall be able to take the second reading in two nights' debate. With regard to the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, I will endeavour to make some arrangement for getting it read a second time as shortly after Easter as is practicable. The measure, it will be recollected, has passed through the House of Lords; and, therefore, the same pressure does not exist with respect to it as applies to the case of some other Bills. Sir, I think I may now venture to appeal to the House to come to a decision on the question of the Motion I have proposed to the House, as there are several Notices of Motion on the Paper, and hon. Members will be put to great inconvenience. To prevent that inconvenience, I will claim to move, "That the Question be now put."

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Why do not you let us answer the Chief Secretary's speech?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. W. REDMOND: You are afraid to be answered.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member persists in these unseemly interruptions, I shall have to take strong measures.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): You are cowards.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 145; Noes 51: Majority 94.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Question, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday, 5th April," put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at twenty minutes
before Seven o'clock till
Thursday 5th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—David Randell, esquire, *for* the County of Glamorgan (Western or Gower Division).

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates; Class I.—Public Works and Buildings, Votes 1 to 6, 8 to 13.

Public Bills—*Committee—Report*—Copyright (Musical Compositions) * [156].

Referred to Standing Committee on Law, &c.—County Courts Consolidation * [173].

Withdrawn—Metropolis Local Government * [14].

IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER (MR. GILHOOLY).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the Imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

Macroom, Co. Cork, Ireland,
31st March, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. J. Gilhooly, M.P., has been sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment without H.L., commencing on the 30th March, 1888, under the Prevention of Crime Act, 1871, 34 & 35 Vict. chap. 112, sect. 12, for an assault committed on a County Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
H. Caddell, Lt. Col.,
Resident Magistrate,
Co. Cork.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker, the House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

MOROCCO—DISPUTE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have considered the expediency of offering their mediation in the dispute between the American Representative at Tangier and the Sultan of Morocco?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have not offered their mediation in the differences which have arisen between the United States Consul at Tangier and the Moorish Government. Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco has done what he could with propriety to bring about an accommodation, but without success at present; and the case in question is understood to have been referred by the Consul to the Government of the United States.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY MEDICAL STAFF—ROYAL WARRANT OF 1879.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Royal Warrant of November, 1879, which gave officers of the Army Medical Staff the right to retire after 20 years' service, is about to be interfered with or set aside; whether the condition of retirement was intended as an inducement to medical men to enter the Service; and, whether this provision under the said Warrant, if interfered with, will affect the retirement of those medical officers who entered the Service since the Warrant was issued?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): This Question has been on the Paper for four days, and, perhaps, I may be allowed to answer it. It is not intended to prevent medical officers from retiring after 20 years' service; but it is proposed to require a reasonable service in a given rank before allowing retirement on the rates permitted for that rank. The power of retiring after 20 years' service was, undoubtedly, held out as an inducement to candidates to come forward; and, as regards that retirement on £1 a-day, no restriction will be placed upon it. The last paragraph of the Question touches on vested rights. These, as in all other branches of the Service, must be regarded as governed by the Rule enunciated by Lord Penzance's Royal Commission in 1876, that an officer's rights are limited to the rank he holds; and this Rule is embodied in the Preamble to the Royal Warrant.

PRISONS—CONVICT PRISON AT DOVER.

Major DICKSON (Dover) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as the convict prison at Dover is now ready and occupied, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the harbour of refuge, the convict station having been established at Dover for that purpose?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to ask Parliament this Session to make provision for the commencement of a harbour of refuge at Dover.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—REVISION OF VALUATION.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that, if not premature, he should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the revision of valuation would be dealt with as a separate Bill apart from the Local Government Bill; and, if so, whether the Government would be prepared to introduce a Bill for the revision of valuation, and to put it on a more simple basis during the present Session?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, it was usual to give Notice of the kind of Question asked by the hon. Member; but probably he was unacquainted with the practice. It was not possible for him to give any undertaking of the kind.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) inquired, Whether, if Classes I. and II. of the Civil Service Estimates were finished that night, the Government would go on with Class III. to-morrow?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Certainly, Sir; if we are so fortunate as to get through Classes I. and II. to-night, we shall proceed with Class III. to-morrow.

MEMORANDUM

OF

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY

RELATING TO THE

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1888-89.

(PRESENTED BY HER MAJESTY'S COMMAND.)

ABSTRACT OF ESTIMATES OF CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Civil Services.

—	1888-89.	1887-88. (Grants in Session of 1887.)	Increase.	Decrease.	CASH EXTRA RECEIPTS.	
					1888-89.	1887-88.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Class I.—Works and Buildings	1,723,338	2,005,942	—	282,604	43,943	43,563
Class II.—Salaries, &c., of Public Departments	2,427,208	2,469,663	—	42,455	312,887	320,942
Class III.—Law and Justice	6,307,530	6,303,055	4,475	—	718,146	725,552
Class IV.—Education, Science and Art	5,738,044	5,574,178	163,866	—	61,200	62,230
Class V.—Foreign and Colonial	616,868	617,350	—	482	12,950	13,820
Class VI.—Non-Effective ..	1,259,778	1,248,116	11,662	—	50	50
Class VII.—Miscellaneous ..	72,527	121,578	—	49,051	2,000	2,200
£	18,145,293	18,339,882	180,003	374,592	1,151,176	1,168,357

Net Decrease £194,589

Cash Extra Receipts, Decrease } £17,181

Revenue Departments.

—	1888-89.	1887-88. (Grants in Session of 1887.)	Increase.	Decrease.	CASH EXTRA RECEIPTS.	
					1888-89.	1887-88.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Customs	937,920	951,848	—	13,928	46,398	46,098
Inland Revenue	1,807,629	1,763,879	43,750	—	29,000	25,000
Post Office	5,666,666	5,420,770	245,896	—	364,518	295,464
Post Office Packet Service	641,500	699,341	—	57,841	—*	103,760
Post Office Telegraphs ..	2,036,836	1,950,248	86,588	—	12,410	11,410
£	11,090,551	10,786,086	376,234	71,769	452,326	481,732

Net Increase £304,465

Cash Extra Receipts, Decrease } £29,406

* Now taken in aid of the Vote.

MEMORANDUM.

Civil Services.

The services for which provision is made in the Civil Service Estimates may be roughly divided into two large groups.

(1.) The first group comprises those services which, having been once established by Act of Parliament, or otherwise, grow, as a rule, in cost year after year, under the influence of increasing population or the automatic effect of regulations laid down for their administration. The growth of such services is independent of any action of the Government so long as the regulations under which they are administered remain unaltered; and any alteration which has been made in the last 20 years has generally been on the side of augmentation. The control exercised by the Government over the Estimates for these services is, in fact, limited to satisfying themselves that sufficient, and not more than sufficient, provision is made for them according to the best means available for calculating expenditure, which must, at best, be somewhat uncertain. In 1868-69 the total of such services did not much exceed £2,340,000; in the current year they amount to at least £8,830,000, an increase of £6,490,000, of which above £2,000,000 has been added from time to time by fresh grants in relief of local rates, but the rest is due to automatic growth.

The principal items of this class in the current and the ensuing year are as follows:—

	1888-89.	1887-88.	1888-89.	
			Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Rates on Government Property, Contributions in lieu of.	228,848	226,105	2,743	—
Roads, Contributions to	295,000	*571,500	—	276,500
Poor Laws, Grants in Aid under	369,690	369,910	—	220
Criminal Prosecutions, Repayments to Counties and Boroughs.	138,000	135,000	3,000	—
County Courts, Remuneration of Registrars and High Bailiffs.	370,570	343,635	26,935	—
Metropolitan Police Fund, Contribution to ..	579,220	571,320	7,900	—
Police, County and Borough, Great Britain, Contribution to Charge of.	1,023,200	1,005,500	700	—
Reformatories and Industrial Schools, Allowance for Inmates of.	380,063	380,082	—	19
Education, Science and Art, Payments by Results.	4,652,187	4,493,985	158,202	—
Pauper Lunatics, Allowance for	687,460	681,300	6,160	—
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency.	60,013	51,259	8,754	—
Total .. .. £	8,784,251	8,829,596	231,394	276,739

Decrease .. £45,345

* The rate of contribution was doubled for this year only.

To understand correctly the significance of the relative expenditure provided for in the two years, the temporary increase of the Road Grants in the year 1887-88 should be excluded from the comparison, when it will be seen that the automatic increase which has to be provided for in 1888-89 amounts to £231,155.

(2.) The second group comprises those services over which, except so far as they are affected by the exigencies of business, the Government may be regarded as exercising effective control. The amounts which come under this group are as follows:—

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Class I.—Works and Buildings ...	1,199,490	1,208,337	—	8,847
Class II.—Civil Departments	2,057,518	2,099,753	—	42,235
Class III.—Law and Justice	3,816,477	3,867,518	—	51,041
Class IV.—Education, Science and Art	1,085,857	1,080,193	5,664	—
Class V.—Foreign and Colonial ..	616,868	617,350	—	482
Class VI.—Non-Effective	512,305	515,557	—	3,252
Class VII.—Miscellaneous	72,527	121,578	—	49,051
£	9,361,042	9,510,286	5,664	154,908
		Net Decrease	£149,244	

There is thus a reduction of £149,244 in the provision made next year for those services over which control is retained in the hands of the Government.

Another correction should, however, be made before proceeding to analyze this reduction. The term of the Irish Land Commission expires, under the Act 44 & 45 Vict. c. 49, upon the 22nd August next, and consequently, pending its extension by Parliament, provision has only been made in the Estimates for expenditure up to that date. If full provision had been made a further sum of £54,116 would have had to be included in the Estimates; and if this sum be taken into account in anticipation of the renewal of the term of the Commission, the effective reduction of those Estimates which are under the control of the Government as compared with those of the current year would be £94,426.

The principal fluctuations which have produced this result are as follows:—

CLASS I.

WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

	£
Total 1887-88	2,005,942
,, 1888-89	1,723,338
Decrease	282,604
Deduct,—Decrease of Automatic Services . .	273,757
Decrease of other Services	£8,847

——	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	CAUSE.
	£	£	£	£	
Royal Parks	89,013	101,430	—	12,417	Transfer of Battersea, Victoria and Kennington Parks to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Total amount transferred about £18,000 a-year, of which about £6,500 taken off Estimate of current year, and remainder next year.
Houses of Parliament	46,940	55,635	—	8,695	Less required for restoration of Westminster Hall and new drainage works.
Public Buildings ..	130,629	142,255	—	11,626	Completion of New National Gallery, transfer of Westminster Bridge to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and reduction in cost of maintenance of buildings.
Revenue Department Buildings	238,514	208,627	29,887	—	New Buildings for Postal and Telegraph Service.
Metropolitan Police Courts	15,756	6,737	9,019	—	On account for New Court at Dalston and improvements at Hammersmith.
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin	42,500	30,000	12,500	—	Greater progress will be made by the buildings next year.

The increased amount required for Revenue Department Buildings is due to the very extensive additions which are now required for Postal and Telegraph accommodation to keep pace with the growth of business, especially as regards the Parcels Post, all over the United Kingdom: £114,000 is provided next year for the extension of buildings, which will require a further sum of £308,000 to complete them in future years; and a sum of £185,000 is also placed on the Post Office and Telegraph Estimates for the Purchase of sites and buildings.

Expenditure upon Prison Buildings is provided in the Estimates for the various Prison Departments.

Considerable sums have of recent years been expended in sanitary works, and although the heavier part of the cost has now been defrayed, above £8,000 is included in next year's Votes for this purpose in various Public Offices in London.

Upon the whole, the expenditure of a capital nature (as distinguished from the charges of maintenance) upon building operations proposed by the Government for next year in connection with the Civil and Revenue Departments amounts to £615,983, and in the current year to £573,321.

CLASS II.

CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

	£
Total 1887-88	2,469,663
,, 1888-89	2,427,208
,, Decrease	42,455
Deduct,—Increase of Automatic Services . .	220
Decrease of other Services	£42,235

———	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	———
	£	£	£	£	
Privy Council Office..	51,356	46,321	5,035	—	Grant in aid of Dairy and Agricultural Education.
Board of Trade ..	104,017	108,107	—	4,090	Preliminary reduction on account of reorganization of Office of Seamen's Registry.
Civil Service Commission.	44,477	40,531	3,946	—	Increased amount of bonuses for copyists.
Land Commission for England.	12,210	24,797	—	12,587	The proceedings under the Tithe Redemption Act of last Session are approaching completion.
Stationery and Printing.	545,977	556,303	—	10,326	More favourable contracts recently arranged for printing for Parliament and Public Departments.
Secret Service	40,000	50,000	—	10,000	
Public Works Office, Ireland.	41,728	47,751	—	6,023	Reduction of staff required for inspecting works carried out by loans under Land Acts.

The sum required for the Service of the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade is £8,637 greater than in the current year, chiefly owing to the increased business. But the increased expenditure being covered by increased fees, which are taken in aid of the Vote, no increase appears in the Grant.

CLASS III.

LAW CHARGES.

	£
Total 1887-88	6,303,055
,, 1888-89	6,307,530
,, Increase	4,475
Increase of Automatic Services	55,516
Decrease of other Services	£51,041

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Law Charges, England.	77,776	82,576	—	4,800	Diminished expenditure anticipated on criminal prosecutions.
Police Courts, London and Sheerness.	17,743	15,689	2,054	—	Staff for new court at Dalston.
Special Police	57,000	37,000	20,000	—	Contribution towards expense of Police guarding outside of Public Buildings.
Prisons, England and the Colonies.	721,180	758,018	—	36,838	Diminished number of Prisoners; closing and amalgamation of prisons; lower price of supplies.
County Court Officers, Ireland.	112,750	100,854	11,896	—	Remuneration of valuers attending courts under Land Act of Last Session; additional magistrate.
Royal Irish Constabulary.	1,439,288	1,412,315	26,973	—	Increased pay by length of service; periodical clothing; additional travelling and pensions; no increase of numbers.
Irish Land Commission.	45,912	100,028	—	54,116	Explained above (page 461).
Prisons, Ireland ..	134,742	143,050	—	8,308	Diminished number of prisoners; closing of prisons.

Reductions exceeding in the aggregate £5,000 a-year have been effected by reorganisation of various legal Departments in England and Ireland during the current year.

CLASS IV.

EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

	£
Total 1887-88	5,574,178
,, 1888-89	5,738,044
,, Increase	163,866
Deduct,—Increase of Automatic Services . . .	158,202
Increase of other Services . . .	£5,664

The principal charges in this class come under the head of "Automatic." Other variations are few and unimportant, but the Purchase Grants of the British Museum and Natural History Museum have been augmented by £5,000; and £1,721 (the balance of a special grant of £2,000) has been provided for the National Gallery for the purchase of pictures, the ordinary grant having been temporarily suspended in consequence of the large sum expended in the purchase of the Blenheim pictures. The total of the sums borne upon the Estimates of the ensuing year on account of purchases for the various museums and galleries amounts to £39,759. In the current year, £36,500 is provided.

CLASS V.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL.

	£
Total 1887-88	617,350
,, 1888-89	61,868
Decrease	£482

—	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	—
	£	£	£	£	
Consular Services ..	179,433	184,125	—	4,692	Some consulships abolished and increased fees taken in aid of the Vote.
Slave Trade Services	13,120	16,400	—	3,280	Diminution in bounties payable on captured slavers.
Colonies, Grants-in-Aid.	51,115	26,416	24,699	—	Purchase of steamer for New Guinea Government, £18,500; maintenance, £3,500, under agreement at Colonial Conference.
South Africa and St. Helena.	56,235	86,180	—	29,945	Reduced cost of administration of Bechuanaland.
Cyprus, Grant-in-Aid	30,000	18,000	12,000	—	Deficient revenue owing to severe drought.

CLASS VI.

NON-EFFECTIVE.

	£
Total 1887-88	1,248,116
,, 1888-89	1,259,778
,, Increase	11,662
Increase of Automatic Services	14,914
Decrease of Other Services	£3,252

The decrease of this class is due to the excess of Pensions ceased over those granted in the year.

CLASS VII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

	£.
Total 1887-88	121,578
,, 1888-89	72,527
Decrease	£49,051

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Public Works and Industries, Ireland	26,000	50,000	—	24,000	Partly a re-vote of the Special Grant which will not all be spent in the Current Year.
Adelaide Exhibition	—	2,650	—	25,719	Special Services in the Current Year.
Celebration of the Jubilee.	—	17,000	—		
Repayments to Civil Contingencies Fund	—	6,069	—		

(3.) Some improvements have been made this Session in the arrangement of the Civil Estimates, principally in the description of Sub-heads, in order to secure greater uniformity of grouping similar services in different Votes. This has involved some transfer of items, but not of sufficient consequence to notice in detail. Notes have also been added to every Vote, showing the amounts provided in other Votes, or charged on the Consolidated Fund, in connection with the same service. By this arrangement the total estimated charge of each service can now be ascertained.

The principle of appropriation of Extra Receipts in aid of the Votes which has been for some years adopted in the case of the Army and Navy Estimates, has only, as yet, been adopted to a limited extent in the Civil Service Estimates. But in some special cases, such as when a new service is placed upon the Votes by Act of Parliament, and provision is, at the same time, made by the Act for repayment of the expenses of administration by fees or otherwise, the receipts are then taken in aid of the Vote. The expenses incurred under the Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act of last Session, under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts and others, have been dealt with in this manner; also the contributions of India and the Colonies to the cost of the Packet Service.

Revenue Departments.

(4.) The Estimates for the Customs and Inland Revenue necessarily depend rather upon the nature than upon the amount of the Revenue to be collected. They have been in course of reduction for several years. Those of the Post Office may be expected to steadily grow as the business increases.

CUSTOMS.

The effective charge of the Customs Service has fallen from £855,077 in 1882-83 to £739,645 in 1888-89, a decrease of £115,432. During the reorganisation by which this has chiefly been effected, the non-effective charge in the same period has been raised from £155,078 to £198,275, an increase of £43,197, part of which however is due to pensioners over 60 years of age who had already earned their retirement. The immediate net reduction of charge has therefore been £72,235, which will be increased as the non-effective charges fall in. A considerable saving has been effected by the reduction of many separate bonding warehouses and their amalgamation with Inland Revenue Establishments, but large reductions have also been made by more economical methods of administration.*

The decrease of £13,928 in the charge for next year is almost entirely due to reductions of establishment.

INLAND REVENUE.

The Inland Revenue requires for its service in the ensuing year £43,750 more than in the current year. But the whole of this increase is due to the intermittent charge† of the triennial valuation of property under Schedules A and B of the Income Tax outside the metropolitan area, which usually brings in additional tax to the extent of £80,000 to £100,000 a-year. The total of the temporary addition from this cause is £44,100, so that the permanent charge is in fact less than that of the current year. A fairer idea of the relative expense of the Department is gained by comparing the charge of 1885-86, the last year of triennial valuation. In that year the total charge was £1,823,157, or £15,528 more than in the ensuing year. The lessened charge of the ensuing year includes £234,044 for Pensions against £212,653 in 1885-86, so that the reduction

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*CUSTOMS.

—	Effective.	Non-Effective.	TOTAL.
	£	£	£
1882-83	855,077	155,078	1,010,155
1883-84	838,830	167,955	1,006,785
1884-85	810,240	176,711	986,951
1885-86	796,125	181,608	977,733
1886-87	772,010	184,047	956,067
1887-88	756,020	197,228	953,248
1888-89	739,645	198,275	937,920

†INLAND REVENUE.

—	Effective.	Non-Effective.	TOTAL.
	£	£	£
1882-83....	1,587,937	212,685	1,800,622
	(Triennial	Valuation)	
1883-84....	1,557,772	210,594	1,768,366
1884-85....	1,551,396	210,619	1,762,015
1885-86....	1,610,504	212,653	1,823,157
	(Triennial	Valuation)	
1886-87....	1,583,227	214,279	1,797,506
1887-88....	1,549,704	214,175	1,763,878
1888-89....	1,573,585	234,044	1,807,629

of effective charge is above £36,000 a-year. This increased pension charge has all been added in the current year, in which extensive reorganisations have taken place, including the adoption of the working day of seven hours; by which the effective staff has been reduced upwards of 200 in number and £18,407 in cost. A large part of the resulting non-effective charge (£13,807) is in this case also paid to pensioners over 60 years of age who have already earned their retirement.

POST OFFICE AND TELEGRAPHS.

The combined Estimates of £7,703,502 for the Post Office and Telegraph Services (exclusive of the Packet Service), are swollen by the large provision of £185,000 for purchase of sites to meet the great extension of buildings required by the development of business, especially that of the Parcels Post, all over the country. Excluding the charge for sites in both years the increased working expenses of the two services for the ensuing year amount to £327,484, of which the ordinary increment of salaries and the pay of additional staff have alone added in London £93,865, and in the provinces £168,642, the remainder being entirely due to the growth of business.

PACKET SERVICE.

The contracts for the Eastern, Australian, and West Indian Mail Services, though made by the Postmaster General, are in effect joint undertakings of the Imperial and Indian and Colonial Post Offices. The addition to the Estimates for 1888-9 of a charge of £170,000 for the Australian Service has afforded the opportunity of taking the Indian and Colonial contributions as Appropriations-in-Aid of the Vote. The necessity will thus be avoided of unnecessarily swelling both Expenditure and Revenue, and of asking Parliament to vote a gross sum, of which a large proportion would afterwards be paid to the Exchequer as Extra Receipts.

Treasury Chambers,
9 March 1888.

W. L. JACKSON.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £29,260, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that this Vote might be divided into three heads—namely, palaces in the personal occupation of Her Majesty; secondly, palaces partly in the occupation of Her Majesty; and, thirdly, palaces which were not in the occupation of Her Majesty. He had given Notice of an Amendment to reduce the Vote by the sum of £500 as a protest against the system of expenditure upon palaces not in the occupation of Her Majesty. He did not complain of Hampton Court Palace, which might be considered a people's palace, but there was an item in the Vote against which he did protest for Hampton Court Stud-house. He had never yet been able to discover what on earth Hampton Court Stud-house was. He understood that a certain number of cream-coloured horses were bred there; but he did not know what became of them, although the country had to pay £400 per annum for the maintenance and repair of Hampton Court Stud-house, and £15 for furniture. Then, again, there was a palace at Kew Green. He had had great difficulty in finding where that palace was at Kew, and he did not think there were half-a-dozen Gentleman in the House who had the slightest idea where it was, or who lived there. Nevertheless, £556 appeared in the Vote as a charge for its maintenance and repair, together with £20 for furniture and £156 for fuel. There were a number of other houses which were called palaces, but which were not palaces in the sense of ever being occupied by the Sovereign. One of them was a house which was lent to one of the French ex-Royal Dukes, and its maintenance and repair cost about £600. In addition, there was an item for money expended in furniture. If it was neither desirable to let these houses or pull them down, those who occupied them ought certainly to maintain them and keep them in repair, and not come upon the nation for furniture. He would, therefore, move the reduction of the vote by the sum of £500, having reference to the items for Hampton Court Stud-house, Kew Gardens, and the other buildings he had mentioned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £28,760, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, this was not the first time he had had the pleasure of replying to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) on the question of the maintenance of the Royal Palaces, and he was afraid that he could not add anything to the information he had already given on several previous occasions, and which had always been considered satisfactory by the House. The fact was that in former times the expense of maintaining and furnishing the Royal Palaces always fell upon the Civil List. From time to time that Civil List, as the hon. Member knew very well, had been very much reduced. In 1831 it was reduced by the sum of £547,000 per annum, and in 1838, on the accession of Her Majesty, it was further reduced by the sum of £215,000 per annum. When those arrangements were made the country undertook to pay the expense of maintaining and furnishing these Royal Palaces. That was part of the bargain made on that occasion on behalf of the country with the Sovereign for the time being. He could not, therefore, understand how the hon. Member, or any other hon. Member, should dispute the way in which the bargain was carried out, or propose to set it aside. There might be hon. Members who thought that at some future accession to the Throne the Civil List might be still further reduced; but he could not understand how they could desire to break down a bargain which had been deliberately entered into at the beginning of the present reign, and he could not think that the hon. Member seriously proposed that such a thing should be done. In regard to particular points which had been raised by the hon. Member, he must say that there was no difference whatever in principle in the carrying out of the bargain between the palaces in the personal occupation of Her Majesty and those which were not in the occupation of Her Majesty. The principle was the same all through. The country had chosen to take off from the Civil List the charge of maintaining these palaces, and certain sums were put on the Estimates from year to year for the purpose of honestly carrying out the bargain which had been made. As to the particular instance referred to by the hon. Member—namely, Hampton Court Stud-house, that house was attached to Hampton Court Palace and occupied by the Crown Equerries. The stables attached to them were used for the purpose of producing certain kind of horses. The hon. Member would like to know what became of the horses. He (Mr. Plunket) was not bound to know. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Certainly not; but, as a matter of fact, the horses were used for the purpose of horsing Royal carriages. The hon. Member for Northampton said the horses were of a cream colour. Very likely that might be the colour that might be required. Personally, he knew nothing about it, nor did he know whether the hon. Member had a preference for that colour or not. As to the palace at Kew Gardens, it was preserved by the nation, and if the hon. Member had really any serious curiosity on the subject he might easily see it. All these houses were Royal Palaces which Her Majesty had inherited, and which used to be maintained out of the Civil List. They were now, by the agreement entered into with Her Majesty, maintained by the taxpayers of the country and fell upon the Estimates. He could give no precise reply to the question of the hon. Member as to who were the inhabitants of these palaces, inasmuch as they changed from year to year; nor was it any part of his duty to inquire who were in the occupation of them. He was afraid that he could not add more in the way of explanation, or give any further information, than he had given in previous years. He could quite understand that at some future time, if the hon. Member thought a further economy could be effected by an alteration of the Civil List, he might make some proposal of a serious character on the subject. It would, however, be pressing the principle of economy too far to ask the House of Commons in the present day to set aside the bargain made by the Sovereign as regarded these Royal Palaces. He, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would not press his Motion for the reduction of the sum asked for in this respect.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he did not deny that the Civil List had been reduced. There had been numerous expenses thrown upon the Civil List formerly, such as the maintenance of the whole of the Diplomatic Service, the Judges, and so on, which items had never been removed from the list; but he protested against the pious theory of a bargain having been struck between Her Majesty and the nation with regard to the maintenance of these Royal Palaces. There was never any specific bargain between the Crown and the country. The Civil List at the commencement of the Reign was decided on after an exhaustive inquiry as to the expenditure of William IV., and it was upon that basis that the Civil List was established. It was perfectly true that various items on the Civil List were not put down as a charge to Her Majesty, and as a necessary consequence the cost of maintaining certain houses would necessarily fall upon the taxpayer if it was wished to keep them up; but many hon. Members who sat on that side of the House were of opinion that it was quite enough for the nation to bear the cost of maintaining the palaces actually occupied by the Sovereign without maintaining and tinkering up a lot of old houses in various parts of the country, which Her Majesty, instead of occupying herself, granted to certain people for their lives. Many hon. Members thought that it would be better and cheaper for the country to allow these buildings to go to rack and ruin rather than to spend the money of the taxpayers in repairing them, seeing that they were of no benefit to the country, but only to those who lived in them. At any rate, those who occupied them should have them on the same terms as the man who took a house upon a repairing lease. He certainly did not agree with the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). The right hon. Gentleman had answered Questions put to him on this subject before, and had always fallen back on the stupidity of our ancestors in making a bad bargain with the Sovereign; but he (Mr. Labouchere) did not believe that our ancestors had been such fools as the right hon. Gentleman appeared to think, or that they had entered into such a bargain as that which the right hon. Gentleman suggested. If the right hon. Gentleman could not give a more satisfactory answer upon this subject than that which he had just given, he should feel compelled to divide the House upon the question of the reduction of the Vote, in order to put a stop to what appeared to him to be a reckless, wasteful, and useless expenditure.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he thought that the Committee ought to get at the bottom of this so-called bargain between the Sovereign and the country. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had mentioned the word "bargain" or "agreement" five or six times, and had spoken of it as a bargain which the House of Commons was bound to adhere to. If such a bargain had been entered into, it must have been embodied in some document, and he should like to know where that document was to be found? The contention of the right hon. Gentleman was that the Civil List Act was a contract between the Crown and the country. He (Mr. Robertson) altogether denied that. He denied that anything was contained in that Act with which Parliament might not interfere at any moment it chose. The right hon. Gentleman's theory went still further than that. He said that they were not only bound to respect the Civil List Act, but also payments which were made outside that Act. As the right hon. Gentleman maintained that there was an agreement between the Crown and the country, he called upon him to produce it, or to explain what its contents were and what it required the country to do. Unless the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee some more satisfactory answer in reference to this matter, he should feel bound to support the Motion for the reduction of the Vote.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) ought to give the Committee some information as to the uses to which these palaces were put. He did not go as far as his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) when he said that they ought not to keep up any palaces except those which were occupied by the Crown, because it was obvious that certain places were required for the exercise of hospitality. He, therefore, did not agree that all the palaces which were not in the actual occupation of the Sovereign should be pulled down. The right hon. Gentleman, however, seemed to put the matter on too high a ground. He implied that there was a distinct bargain and a schedule of palaces that were to be kept up. If that were so, and there was any specific bargain between the Sovereign and the country in existence, it ought to be produced; if there was no such bargain, it amounted simply to this—that by the Civil List, which was drawn up on behalf of Her Majesty on her accession to the Throne, the country undertook to keep up certain buildings for the purposes of Her Majesty. In that case, he thought it was incumbent on the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) to tell the Committee what the purposes were for which these palaces were occupied. Take the case of Hampton Court Palace. He was bound to say that it was not inappropriate to provide apartments in that palace for the accommodation of the lady relatives of distinguished officers who had fallen in the service of their country. So far as Kew Palace was concerned, he (Sir George Campbell) had seen it through the railings, and it appeared to be a very mysterious place. It did not seem as if anybody ever inhabited it. It cut off part of the gardens, and gave an air of secrecy to the place.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) to say that the Committee had no right to refuse this Vote. In that case, what was the necessity of bringing it forward, and why was Parliament asked to pass it? He thought that the hon. Member for

Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had made out a very strong case, and he should have great pleasure in supporting by his vote the Amendment which had been moved for pulling down this extravagant expenditure.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he regretted that his explanation had not given satisfaction to the hon. Member. He thought it unnecessary to explain the matter more than he had done, but from no wish to give either a discourteous or unsatisfactory answer. The statement he had made was that at the time the Civil List was settled, at the beginning of the present reign, a bargain was entered into between the country and the Sovereign. [Mr. Labouchere: Where?] It was a bargain entered into between the country and the Sovereign, that in consideration of certain large reductions which were made in the Civil List at that time the arrangement whereby certain expenses were borne by the Votes should be continued throughout the present Reign. That bargain was contained in successive Civil List Acts, and the particular Civil List Act which governed the present arrangement was the 1 & 2 *Vict.* (1837), c. 2. The 1st section of that Act recited the principle of the bargain to which he had referred, and the bargain was carried out throughout the rest of the Acts. The effect of the Act generally was that several reductions were made in the Civil List, and certain expenses connected with the honour and dignity of the Crown were to be borne by the sums voted by the taxpayers of the country. In consequence, among the matters connected with the honour and dignity of the Crown was included the maintenance of certain palaces, some of which were in the personal occupation of the Sovereign, some, like St. James's Palace, which were partly in the occupation of the Queen, and certain other palaces which were not in the personal occupation of Her Majesty at all.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked, if a list of them was contained in any Schedule?

Mr. PLUNKET said, he did not think they were contained in any Schedule attached to that or to any of the previous Acts. They were, however, the purposes which had always been included, and there was the same obligation under the Act to keep them up and maintain them. It would be ungracious to criticize the provisions of the Act; but it was, of course, open to the Committee to criticize its administration by the Office of Works, and to say that too much money was being expended in a particular direction. He could only say again, as he had already said, that if the Committee were to refuse to give effect to the policy of the Civil List Act, it would be in his opinion, and also he was sure in the opinion of the country, a departure from the bargain made, although, perhaps, not exactly in words, but in its sense, at the time when the Civil List was made between the country and the Sovereign. That arrangement had ever since been faithfully carried out, and he believed that it had been economically and faithfully carried out to the advantage of the ratepayers of the country. He hoped the explanation he had endeavoured to give of the policy of the Act on which the arrangement depended would be satisfactory.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman amounted to this—that Her Majesty gave up certain Crown lands, in return for which the taxpayers maintained the honour and dignity of the Crown. But they did not recognize the personal right of the Sovereign to the Crown lands. The right was first put forward in the time of George III. There was then a servile Minister, who put in the Preamble of the Civil List Act a statement that His Majesty gave up his right to the Crown lands during life. That statement had been repeated in the recital of succeeding Civil List Acts; but the fact that Her Majesty gave up her right to the Crown lands did not bestow any right of the kind on Her Majesty. If it amused a Minister of the Crown to put in an Act a statement that the Sovereign gave up certain rights which they denied she had, of course they could not make any objection; but, assuming that this bargain did exist, what did it amount to? It amounted to this—that on the side of the taxpayers they engaged as a *quid pro quo* for the Crown lands to maintain the honour and dignity of the Crown. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell the Committee that the honour and dignity of the Crown depended upon furnishing and maintaining a house for an Equerry at Hampton Court, in order to look after a few cream-coloured horses which were brought out every three or four years? Or did he mean to say that it depended upon maintaining those various houses, one of which was given to a French Prince? The honour and dignity of the Crown would be maintained if all those houses which were spread over the public parks were to fall into ruin. He could understand that the palaces occupied by Her Majesty, or partly occupied by her, ought to be maintained; but the maintenance and furnishing of all these small houses spread over the Royal Parks had nothing whatever to do with the honour and dignity of the Crown. The Committee ought to refuse this money; but whether it did so or not, he thought that, under the circumstances, the Committee, at least, had the right to decide whether it was properly and legitimately spent for the maintenance of the honour and dignity of the Crown. It was an item which appeared in the Votes every year, and he presumed that hon. Members were called upon to express an opinion upon the Estimates. When, however, they were prepared to do so, they were told that they had no right to criticize the Estimates, but must be prepared to vote them as they stood. It was a perfect absurdity to ask the Committee to take that course, and he should certainly go to a Division as a protest against the system.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) had entirely failed to substantiate the theory of a contract with which he began to defend the Vote. He (Mr. Robertson) wished to point out that the right hon. Gentleman had mixed up two entirely different theories. He had started with the theory that the country had undertaken to pay the expense of maintaining these palaces; but, in his second speech, the right hon. Gentleman said that the obligation was incurred in consideration of a large reduction of the Civil List—that was to say, that the Civil List of Queen Victoria being to a certain extent similar to the Civil List of her Predecessor, there was a bargain entered into that the charges heretofore borne should continue to be borne. Now, what was the evidence the right hon. Gentleman had produced? He had produced a recital in the Civil List Act, which stated that in consideration of the surrender of the Crown lands the country was to make suitable provision for the honour and dignity of the Crown. It might be said that that was a contract whereby the House of Commons was forbidden to enter into the Civil List Act or to amend it, the same as any other Statute. He did not admit that assertion; but, granting it, what the right hon. Gentleman had to prove was that at the time of the passing of the Act there was anything like a contract or undertaking that those expenses outside the Civil List Act were to be borne by the Estimates. That view of the case was altogether unsupported by any evidence the right hon. Gentleman had produced, or could produce. As the right hon. Gentleman had been unwise enough to drag the Civil List into the discussion, he (Mr. Robertson) wished to point out how certain items in the Estimate and the finding of them appeared to be governed by the grant made in the Civil List Act. There were six classes of grants contained in that Act, and the second class was for the salaries for Her Majesty's Household, while the third was for the expenses of Her Majesty's Household. There was no definition in the Act itself as to what those two items would cover; but he should have supposed that a fair interpretation would cover the maintenance of the palaces to which the hon. Member for Northampton had referred, while the other class covered the salaries paid to persons in the service of Her Majesty in houses set apart for the use of Her Majesty. In the Vote now before the Committee, he found the sum of £2,352 set down for salaries and allowances to Her Majesty's servants in the Royal Palaces. Why were those salaries and allowances not paid out of the third branch of the Civil List, and why were not the expenses for the maintenance and repairs of those houses paid for out of the second branch of the Civil List? Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give an answer to that question. The House having made a provision of £131,200 for salaries and allowances to persons in the service of Her Majesty, he could not for a moment understand how it was reasonable to come down year after year to ask the House for additional salaries and allowances also connected with the Queen's Palaces. Some of these salaries and allowances were, no doubt, small in amount—for instance, in the case of Buckingham Palace, there was the insignificant item of £8 for the rat-catcher, £1 1*s.* a-week to a labourer, and £1 1*s.* to a turncock; but surely it was ridiculous, after having made a grant of £131,000 to Her Majesty for salaries to her servants, to come down to that House and ask for a Vote of £8 to pay a rat-catcher. The principle was an important one, and as the right hon. Gentleman had insisted in dragging the Civil List into discussion he wished to ask him on what principle these expenses were not included in the Civil List in Classes I. and II.? On what principle was the Civil List maintained? He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give this information to the Committee. Unless he could maintain it, he should certainly vote in favour of the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Northampton.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the First Commissioner of Works to give an explanation of an increase in the Vote for Holyrood Palace. He found that the expense of warders there had been increased from £234 to £239?

Mr. PLUNKET said, the salaries to which the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. E. Robertson) had referred were salaries of persons who were employed for the purpose of taking care of these buildings and keeping them in proper repair; and if the Office of Works was to be responsible for the repair and maintenance of buildings, of course they must employ persons even of such humble calling as a turncock and rat-catcher. If there was any absurdity in the matter, it was the absurdity of any hon. Member criticizing such expenditure. With regard to Holyrood Palace, he was afraid he could not at that moment tell the hon. Member (Mr. Hunter) what the particular increase was due to, as he had not at hand the details of the expenditure. The increase, however, was very slight, and during the last two or three years there had been a considerable reduction in all these items. He was informed at the moment by his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that the increase in expenditure at Holyrood Palace was owing to the employment of additional warders to take care of certain parts of Holyrood Palace which had been thrown open to the public; and arrangements had been made with the Corporation of Edinburgh, under which it was necessary to employ the additional servants.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 37; Noes 77: Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 55.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2). £1,500, to complete the sum for Marlborough House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if he could inform the Committee what the total amount spent on sanitary works in connection with Marlborough House had been? He believed that a great many hundred pounds had been spent every year for a number of years in connection with the sanitary works of the residence of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Indeed, he believed that a far larger sum had been expended than would have been necessary to rebuild Marlborough House altogether.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, he hardly knew what the hon. Member meant. No doubt, there had been from time to time considerable expenditure incurred in connection with sanitary works at Marlborough House; but he did not know over how many years the expenditure had extended. He believed it had been going on ever since His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales began to reside there; but he was unable to say what the particular items amounted to.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, if they had not reached £10,000?

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was unable to say, nor for how long a time the expenses had been going on.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that it had been going on, at any rate, for the last 15 years—ever since the drains were taken up in Pall Mall and the pond was drained.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was altogether unable to enter into any details; but if the hon. Member would put down a Question upon the Paper; he would endeavour to obtain the information he required.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would do so on the Report

Mr. PLUNKET said, he would be prepared to give the information on the Report.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £77,013, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that he had always protested against the expenditure under this head, and he did so on two grounds—first, because he considered that the amount was too large; and, secondly, because the public were excluded from very large portions of the different public parks. With regard to the Richmond Park, there was a larger number of officials there than any private gentleman would employ. There was a Ranger, a Deputy Ranger, a Bailiff, a Superintendent under the Ranger, and an Assistant Superintendent. These were the head officials who had to look after others. He had always noticed in the accounts which had been submitted before that very large items were set down for gamekeepers. He had called attention to those items more than once. A salary of £250 a-year used to be paid to head-gamekeepers, and £200 a-year to sub-gamekeepers—such as assistants and deputies. He did not, however, see these amounts in the present Estimates, and he wished to know where these gamekeepers were? These gamekeepers were really supposed to be employed to guard the deer; but, in point of fact, he imagined they were there because they were there. Of course, it was necessary for a number of people to look after the deer; but he doubted whether any persons in the position of gamekeepers would be paid by any private gentleman £250 or £200 per annum. He was strongly of opinion that this expenditure ought to be done away with. He could not flatter himself that he had induced the Government to discharge these men; but he very much doubted whether the deer ought to be maintained. They were miserable, tame creatures, except at one time of the year, when they became a nuisance to mankind and a danger. In point of fact, there had been some of these deer running at the people who made use of the Park, and notices had been put up warning the public against going too near them. Surely the Parks were made for human beings, and not for deer. In Hyde Park they had done away with the deer in order to allow the public free access to the Park. The amount of pleasure which people could derive from looking at the deer did not justify the expenditure incurred in keeping them. Another objection in regard to Public Parks was that a large part of them was taken away from the public use of the community. His hon. Friend the Member for South-West Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) had moved for a Return which had been laid before the House, in which it was stated what amount of land had been taken away and what amount had been enclosed in the different Parks included in the list given in the Return. There was, however, another Park which had not been included, though he did not know why it should not have been—namely, Windsor Great Park. Bushey Park consisted of 994 acres, and the public were excluded from 322 acres which were used as pasture land, meadow land, and land for the use of the Royal Palaces. He supposed the wonderful cream coloured horses required this land. Hampton Court Park contained 752 acres; but how much would the Committee suppose was reserved for the public? Not one single acre. Hampton Court Park consisted, as he had said, of 752 acres, and from the whole of that area the public were excluded. Now, Hampton Court and Bushey Park were very much frequented by the people, and it was preposterous that the whole of one Park, and a large portion of the other, should be taken away from them. In Richmond Park, also, 440 acres were taken away from the public. He would anticipate the right hon. Gentleman in pointing out that between 1873 and 1887 more acres had been thrown open than had been enclosed. That was all very well, but he wanted all the enclosed acres thrown open to the public, because they belonged to the public, and ought to be devoted to purposes of recreation. They were never intended to be given to Rangers, Deputy Rangers, and similar persons; but the whole should be thrown open to the public, except some small enclosures for timber and so on. He had given Notice of his intention to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £500, and he would now move that Amendment with the view of securing that the subject should be discussed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £76,513, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, that the hon. Member for Northampton was, of course, aware that there had been a considerable reduction int his Vote in the present year; and not only had there been a reduction compared with the Estimates of last year, but compared with the Estimates of a few years ago. That was, no doubt, owing to a great extent to the Act passed last year, a very good Act indeed, in passing which the hon. Member himself had a considerable share. That Act transferred a certain number of Metropolitan Parks, which previously fell on the Estimates for maintenance, to the Metropolitan Board of Works. There had also been a considerable reduction in the expenditure on the Parks which were still maintained by the Office of Works. The hon. Member for Northampton had directed attention to particular points. In the first place, he complained of the office of Ranger, Deputy Ranger, and other officials he had named. They were the same officials who had always been employed in connection with the Parks. The hon. Member said there was a difference in the nomenclature applied to these officials, and he asked why the name had been changed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he had not asked that, but he had asked where the gamekeepers had gone.

Mr. PLUNKET thought the hon. Member went on to say that there was a difference in the title of these officials. It was quite true, and the alteration was in the first place, he believed, suggested by the criticisms which the hon. Member had himself from time to time made upon these Votes. The answer of the Government always was that these officials were not, in the true sense of the word, gamekeepers. Their business was to look after the general management of the Parks, and, therefore, they had now been called Superintendents. A part of their business was to take care of the deer, and it was for that reason that in former Estimates they were described as "gamekeepers." It was part of their functions then, and still was, to take care of the deer, and the only sense in which the officials were employed as gamekeepers was in having care of the deer in the Parks. The deer had been under their care for centuries; there were about 1,500 head of deer in Richmond Park—the same in number as in the days of Cromwell. Of course, the question whether the deer ought to be maintained or not was quite another matter. He did not agree with the hon. Gentleman, and he did not think that the public would agree with him, that it would be wise to remove the deer from the Park. He believed that if they were to have a Park of that kind, one of the best specimens we possessed of an English Park, the presence of the deer added an element of great beauty and interest to the general effect of the Park. He was entitled to say, before passing away from this subject, that there was other game in the Park as well as deer—pheasants, for instance. They were not maintained at the public expense at all, but at the expense of the Ranger, who provided the pheasants and the food for them, and also gamekeepers in the ordinary sense to take care of the pheasants, and of the other game to be found in the Parks. In regard to the question of enclosures, the hon. Member had himself admitted that they were less extensive now than they were some years ago. The enclosures in Richmond Park were mainly for the purpose of protecting the new plantations which were Crown property. As in the course of time the older trees became unsightly and fell into decay, they were replaced by young trees from these plantations. He could assure the hon. Member that there would be no unnecessary expense connected with the plantations.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, there was a subject connected with this Vote which he desired to bring under the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. There were certain Parks in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh which were public Parks under the Office of Works in the same sense as those in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis. He was bound to say that when any question connected with these Parks was brought before the right hon. Gentleman he had always evinced a readiness to consider the representations made to him. The people of Edinburgh at the present moment complained of certain petty restrictions that were placed upon their enjoyment of the Arboretum which had been handed over to the Office of Works for management. The Arboretum was primarily intended for the use of the public, and was only in a secondary degree a scientific institution. This might appear to be comparatively a small matter, seeing that the Regulations to which he referred related to the admission of perambulators, the opening of gates, and the hours of entering into the Arboretum and of closing it. He understood the objection taken by the Office of Works to meeting the views of the inhabitants was that the Arboretum must not be looked upon as a Public Park, but must be placed in the same category as Kew Gardens, and regarded as public gardens made use of for scientific purposes. The use of the Arboretum as a Park was regarded by the Office of Works as a matter of secondary importance. Upon that ground Rules had been drawn up for the use of the Arboretum similar to those which prevailed at Kew Gardens. These might be suitable to the Botanic Gardens, which adjoined the Arboretum, but they were not suitable to the Arboretum. In the summer time no place was more frequented than the Arboretum. If any hon. Member would go there upon a summer afternoon he would find how largely it was frequented by all classes of the community living in Edinburgh; but he would also find petty restrictions which were imposed to guard the public from the full enjoyment of the Gardens. There was another and most important point in regard to the future management of the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. It was generally known that it was under the contemplation of the Government to transfer the Botanical Gardens and the Arboretum from the Board of Works to the University of Edinburgh. It was a proposal which had been mooted for many years past, but which had never yet been carried out. It had always been steadily resisted by the general community of Edinburgh, by the University of Edinburgh, and by the late Professor and the present Professor of Botany. There was, however, a distinction between the Botanical Gardens and the Arboretum; and if the Government intended to transfer both to the University, they would, in the Arboretum, be transferring to a learned body an institution the object of which was only in a secondary degree a scientific one, its primary object being the enjoyment of the public. There were two grounds of objection to the transfer of both institutions. The first was that of public policy. It had hitherto been the policy of the State to maintain in each of the three divisions of the United Kingdom a Botanic Garden primarily for the encouragement of science; and it would appear, as regards this proposed transfer, that the Treasury were anxious to shift the responsibility for the future development of the Botanic Garden in Edinburgh on to the University of Edinburgh. The University would be placed in a most invidious position—they would be hampered, in developing the Gardens, by the insufficiency of the sums at their disposal; in the second place, they would be obliged to look exclusively to the scientific uses of the Gardens; and, in the third place, by the claims of the people of Edinburgh and the people of Scotland, who had long looked on these Gardens as a national institution.

Mr. PLUNKET said, the last point raised by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) had reference to the policy of the future as to the maintenance of the Arboretum at Edinburgh under the management of the Office of Works, or whether the Arboretum should be handed over to the University of Edinburgh on the understanding that it would be maintained by that institution. That was a question of policy upon which he was not in a position to say anything definitely; but he was quite sure that the objections which had been stated by the hon. Member, and the grounds he had brought forward in support of his own views that the change should not be made, would receive that full consideration to which everything which came from him was entitled. As far as the present management of the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens was concerned, he could assure the hon.

Member that while he remained at the Office of Works, if any proposal or representation should be made as to any alteration in the Rules and Regulations for the enjoyment of these Gardens, or the hours when they ought to be opened and closed, he would go as far as he could to meet the wishes of the public. He must, however, point out that the object of maintaining the Arboretum was not solely the enjoyment of the public of the locality, but to encourage the study of botanic science; and it would be a great mistake if such arrangements were made that the Arboretum could not be used for the purposes of botanical study. As the hon. Gentleman had stated, the same questions were raised in the case of Kew Gardens, and arrangements had to be made to reconcile the claims of sightseers with those of students by reserving the Gardens for students in the earlier part of the day. He could only say that his wish was, as far as possible, to meet the convenience of the public consistently with the objects for which these Gardens were maintained. If the hon. Member would represent exactly what alteration he thought ought to be introduced in reference to the Arboretum at Edinburgh he would be glad to consider it.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his courtesy. He had put himself in communication with the Office of Works on the subject a few months ago. He would not trouble the House with more details; but he would point out that the Arboretum at Edinburgh stood in a different position from Kew Gardens, because the Arboretum was bought and laid out by the people of Edinburgh at a cost of £18,000 as a Public Park. It had, therefore, a distinctly higher claim to be considered as a public garden for the free use of the people than the Royal Botanical Gardens. He wished the right hon. Gentleman to state, as the matter was not absolutely clear at present, whether the Treasury intended to hand over the Arboretum as well as the Botanical Gardens?

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, the hon. Member for Northampton had already referred to the Return for which he had moved last year. He did not intend again to go over the ground which had already been covered by his hon. Friend, but there were a few features in the Return which had not been referred to, and which he thought it desirable to call attention to, because he would be glad to have some further information upon the subject from the First Commissioner of Works. In the first place, he would direct attention to Greenwich Park. In Greenwich Park it would be found that there was a very considerable enclosure. It consisted of 63 acres of ground, and the use to which it was applied was thus described in the Return, "Ranger's Lodge, Offices, and Meadows, and Buildings for Residence." He wished to know if that enclosure had been recently made, or, at all events, whether there had been a considerable addition to it within recent years? If there had been no addition within recent years, he wished to know when the enclosure had been made? He need not refer further to Bushey Park, because his hon. Friend had drawn attention to the chief items in the Return which related to that Park. At the same time, he thought the public would be of opinion that it was an extreme step to exclude the community from the use of one-third of that Park. He came next to Richmond Park. There were some items there to which the attention of the Committee ought to be directed. 141 acres were reserved for the purposes of plantation. There were 104 acres of meadow ground. The Ranger's meadow consisted of 20 acres, and two acres were set aside for the Queen's Kitchen Garden. It certainly seemed to him that that was a survival of a time very different from our own, for it was extremely difficult to imagine what adequate or appreciable use the Crown could make of a kitchen garden in Richmond Park. Further, there were considerable enclosures in connection with residence in the Park. The most flagrant instance of the exclusion of the public was undoubtedly that to which his hon. Friend had referred—namely, the case of Hampton Court Park. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman did not say a single word in reference to that case. Hampton Court Park was as large as Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens put together, and yet the public were excluded from the whole of that area, which extended from Hampton Court Gardens right up to Kingston Bridge, and was bounded in one direction by the towing-path of the river, and in the other by the public highway from Hampton Court to Kingston. Upon the whole length of the road the Park was surrounded by a dead brick wall. He thought that even if it were necessary to exclude the public, they might, at all events, have a peep at the Park. Certainly, anyone who was in the habit of travelling upon that road must be of opinion that a dead wall was an eyesore of a most objectionable character. What was the use made of the Park? As far as he could gather, it was devoted entirely to the feeding of deer. Deer, however, were fed in other Parks without excluding the public from the use of such Parks. He should like the right hon. Gentleman to explain why the same course with regard to deer was not adopted at Hampton Court Park which was followed in other places. In the next place, he would ask, what was the use which was made of the deer? They were informed last year, in the course of the discussion which was raised on this subject, that the venison was presented to Government officials. Now, when he was a Government official he never received any venison. He did not know whom the Government officials were to whom the venison was presented, but he conjectured that they were highly-paid officials who could very well dispense with the perquisite, if it were a perquisite. He believed that some of the Government officials who received the venison would be glad to be relieved from it, seeing that they were called upon to pay a fee when the venison was presented to them. The Park was not entirely devoted to the feeding of deer, because he saw that a certain payment was made by the Master of the Horse, who seemed to be responsible for the deer to the Chief Commissioner of Works for the pasturage of the Parks. What, however, was the payment which was actually made? It only amounted to £280 a-year for 752 acres, or something like 7*s.* an acre. He had been down to see the Park, and he found that the land was very good grazing land indeed, and he should say that the fair letting marketable value of the land would be about £2 per acre. If that were so, he failed to see why the public should suffer from the land being let to the Master of the Horse at the very inadequate sum of 7*s.* per acre. While he found that the Park cost the public over £1,000 a-year, the only return obtained was something like £500, so that there was a dead loss of £500 a-year. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would explain, if the matter was capable of explanation, why the public were altogether excluded from this Park? He knew that it was felt to be a great grievance that the people should have no use of the Park; and, even admitting that it was necessary to feed deer in it, that formed no adequate reason for the exclusion of the public, because it was well known that in other Parks from which the public were not excluded deer were fed. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would not pass over this matter in absolute silence, as he had done with regard to the reference made by the hon. Member for Northampton to the case of Bushey Park.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) wished to call attention to the exclusion of the public from a considerable portion of Regent's Park. The whole area of the Park was 472 acres, and from more than one-fourth of it—namely, 130 acres, the public were excluded. No doubt there were some excellent enclosures, such as the Zoological Gardens and the Botanical Gardens; but he could not understand why the public should be excluded from certain land situate on the western side of the Park, seeing that admission was secured by others on the payment of a fee at the following rates—residents, 21*s.* per annum; non-residents, 42*s.* per annum. He had often seen persons gazing through the railings of the enclosure, envious of the enjoyment which the privileged few were deriving; and, seeing that the public paid £1,000 per annum for maintaining this Park, he thought it hard that they should be excluded from the enjoyment of it. He certainly thought the particular enclosure to which he referred might be thrown open. He observed that a number of houses in this Public Park were let at incredibly low rents. One of them, which had a garden of five acres, was let for £114 10*s.* a-year. He believed it would command that rent without any garden ground at all. There were other houses and enclosures let at equally ridiculous rents. He presumed the reason was that they were letting the old leases not yet run out. He should, however, like to have an explanation on the subject, and an understanding that when the existing leases ran out the houses would be relet and the enclosures thrown open. He did not think that it was the wish of the public to continue to maintain Parks like this for rent-earning purposes. The population around the Park was rapidly increasing, and it was felt to be a very great hardship that Her Majesty's subjects should be excluded from any portion of the Park.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, it seemed to him that a reduction of £500 in the Vote was altogether inadequate. The Return moved for by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), on which the hon. Member for Northampton had based the reduction he had moved, would, if it were examined, show an abundant reason why a very much larger reduction should be made. On page 9 of the Estimates it was shown that the amount of £2,400 was expected to be received during the course of the financial year for what were called estimated extra receipts. Now, that Return showed, first of all, how very misleading and untrustworthy many of the Returns were which were submitted to Parliament, or else it showed that the Return submitted to the House and the Motions of hon. Members were of a very extraordinary character. This Return showed not only the area of the Parks and the area from which the public were excluded, but what public revenue, if any, was derived from the said area. From Bushey Park the revenue derived was £91; from Hampton Court Park, £577; Holyrood, £375; Hyde Park, £466; Regent's Park, £2,536; Richmond Old Deer Park, £972; and from Richmond Park £500. If the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would take the trouble to add up these sums, he would find that they come to a total of more than £5,000, or more than £1,000 in excess of the estimated receipts shown on page 9. If the Return was trustworthy and the figures given to the House by the Treasury were correct, then the Estimate must be wrong, and wrong by at least £1,100; and, therefore, the reduction moved should be not £500, but £1,100. Even the larger sum was altogether below what ought to be realized from these Parks. He did not propose to go over the items mentioned by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green; but in regard to Bushey Park he saw there were receipts for wood and timber of £50, and from other sources £41, although in that Park the enclosed area from which the public were excluded was no less than 104 acres. Those portions of the Park used for meadow land and making hay did not appear to figure on the credit side at all. There were further items of 30 acres for pasture land and 20 acres for meadow land, to say nothing of plantations. There was sufficient property of a profitable kind to secure an income of several hundred pounds, and yet £91 was the entire sum derived from it. With regard to Hampton Court Park, the total amount received was £577, yet the land enclosed amounted to 752 acres, and consisted of very good grazing ground; so that the revenue was altogether too small for the purposes for which the Park was utilized. Then, again, in regard to Regent's Park, the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) had pointed out the ridiculously low sums for which much of the land—very eligible land—was let. Instead of having a sum of £2,340 derived from that property, it ought to be worth, at least £10,000 or £15,000 a-year. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, in replying, in the first instance, to the hon. Member for Northampton in regard to the enclosures in the Deer Parks at Hampton Court and at Richmond, took very good care to confine his observations to the deer in Richmond Park and the pheasants there. Now, no complaints had been made in regard to pheasants, and no attack was made by the hon. Member for Northampton on the Ranger. That question was fought out several years ago, and in regard to the pheasants he believed that some satisfactory arrangement was made. There remained, however, the Old Deer Park of Richmond, 362 acres in extent, and there were 900 acres elsewhere which were entirely given up to deer. If these Parks were situated away from a large city like London, it would be a matter of very little importance; but the preservation of these open spaces for the use of the people were of great consequence to London, with its population of 5,000,000. He thought the Government ought to make some arrangement that would secure that the large spaces at Hampton Court, Regent's Park, and Richmond Park, which were now let at inadequate rents for the benefit of a small ring of persons, should, as soon as possible, either be let at full value, or, as he should prefer, be thrown open to the public, so that, in one form or another, the people should reap the full advantage of this valuable land. Hampton Court Park and Richmond Park, from which the public were now largely excluded, were very easy of access to the people of London, and at holiday times would be of the greatest value. As it was, people could only see from a distance the promised land they were never allowed to enter, and yet, although they were excluded from it, the revenue derived from it by the Government was ridiculously small. He was afraid that there was a great deal of jobbery connected with the management of the Parks. There appeared to be a small ring of highly-paid persons who did derive great advantage of one kind or the other from these Parks; but the great bulk of the public derived no advantage at all.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), in referring to the Return which had been given to the House upon his Motion, had asked some questions in reference to Greenwich and Richmond Parks. The hon. Member had asked whether there had been any decrease in the space which was formerly devoted to the enjoyment of the people, and whether the reserve spaces had been enlarged? As far as he had been able to ascertain in the Office of Works, there had been no such decrease, nor had there been any withdrawal from the public of any rights which they had formerly enjoyed. For instance, the Ranger's Lodge at Greenwich, now in the occupation of Lady Mayo, and the reserve spaces around it, had not been in any way increased in modern times, nor in the case of Richmond Park or Hampton Court had there been any withdrawal from the public of rights which they had formerly enjoyed. Hampton Court Park had never been thrown open to the public at any time; but he was rather inclined to agree with the hon. Member that some improvements might be effected in the present arrangements, especially in regard to the dead wall. He would promise the hon. Member that he would go into the question, and if he could see his way he would be glad to have that improvement effected. As to the position of the Master of the Horse, he had nothing to do with the deer, nor were the deer in Hampton Court Park under his management. What he had to do there had reference to horses, and he was required to pay for the pasturage which the horses had in the Park. He might say that this subject was under consideration at present, and he hoped that a more satisfactory agreement, as far as the public were concerned, might be made with the Master of the Horse. It was a question, however, which had only been mooted within the last few months. With respect to Regent's Park, to which the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) had called attention, he hoped the hon. Member would admit that, as far as it had been in his power, he had endeavoured to make the Park as available as possible for the use of all classes of the public. As a matter of fact, the Park had only been thrown open within comparatively modern times. For a long time it was not open to the public at all, and it was only in the year 1835 that it was first thrown open. Since then, from time to time, various portions of the Park had been added to those which were originally given to the public. No one would probably desire to interfere with the various societies which occupied parts of the Park. There was one portion, however, occupied by the Toxophilite Society, of which the lease would shortly fall in. The Society was, of course, anxious to have the lease renewed, whereas others desired that their grounds should be added to the part now open to the people. The Government were hampered also by other leases and established private rights with which they could not interfere. In 1883, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) was at the Treasury, some additions were made to the spaces available for the public. There was no discrepancy in the figures referred to by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor); but the apparent error arose from the fact that the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) was made not only from the Office of Works, but from the Department of Woods and Forests.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had confined his quotations to those Parks which were shown in the Return.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that a great portion of the argument of the hon. Member was based on the sum of £2,344 18*s.* 10*d.*, which appeared in the Vote as derivable from Regent's Park; but the whole of that sum, as the hon. Member would find from Sub-head B, had been claimed by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, because that part of the Park was under their control. He thought that would reconcile the discrepancy which had been pointed out.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman had referred quite correctly to what was done in 1883, in connection with Regent's Park, and the additions which were then made. When he went to the Treasury he found that a portion of the Park was about to be opened if the claims of some of the residents could be satisfied. He settled that controversy, and, in addition, decided that some of the ground round the villas should be added to the Park. In regard to the lease of the Toxophilite Society, he could only express an earnest hope that when the lease fell in it would not be renewed, but that the land would be made available for the public. It was a great pity that Hampton Court Park was not available for the public. Everyone who went there knew how much the public would appreciate the privilege if they were allowed to use it —that was to say, if the grounds were thrown open to them. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had done much good in several of his concessions to the public, and he (Mr. Childers) trusted that he would go still further in the same direction.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) had joined in the demand that Hampton Court Park should be thrown open to the public. Three hundred acres were taken away from the public in Bushey Park, 75 acres of it being devoted to the maintenance of the cream-coloured horses—which he supposed would be looked upon by the Treasury as essentially "pleasure horses." There were also a number of horses kept in Hampton Court Park, and the land there was let under lease to the Master of the Horse for £280 per annum. It was said that there were a lot of brood mares kept there; but, though he had often asked what became of the foals of the mares, he had never been able to obtain a satisfactory answer. The great point was, however, that these two pieces of land should be thrown open to the public, and that some arrangement should be made by which the cream-coloured horses should be taken elsewhere, and the 75 acres devoted to them thrown open to the public, the lease of the Master of the Horse being terminated. This lease was not one they were bound to maintain as part and parcel of the bargain made with Her Majesty when she came to the Throne. It was open to the Board of Works to refuse to grant the lease. Thousands of holiday makers went down to the Park on Bank Holidays and Sundays. He, himself, had a house near by, and saw the people, and he thought not one of Her Majesty's subjects outside the House would complain if this £280 per annum received from the Master of the Horse were forfeited and this large Park were thrown open to the public. He thought he had been too moderate by only moving to reduce the Vote by £500. He knew, however, that whatever the amount of the reduction moved, whether it were £1,000 or £2,000, it would not be likely to pass; and, therefore, £500 was as good a figure as any other for the purpose of protesting against the system of appointing Rangers and other fancy officers. He should certainly divide the Committee upon the subject.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he thought this was a very useful discussion, and trusted that the land in the Parks referred to would be thrown open to the public. He held that the House would have no real control over matters like those in this Vote until all the Estimates were looked at and examined by a Committee before they were submitted to the whole House. Until that were done hon. Members would not be able to come to a better understanding on these matters. He joined in the hope that Hampton Court Park might before long be thrown open to the public. There was another point upon which he wished to make some observations—namely, as to the deplorable condition of the trees in Kensington Gardens. A great many of these trees were in a dying state, and a great part of the Gardens was either bare or covered by half-dead trees, a thing which appeared to him as nothing short of a national calamity. He thought it the duty of the Government to get to the bottom of this matter. He was not a scientific man as regarded trees, but he had taken some interest in this matter, and he had made inquiries in reference to the condition of the trees in Kensington Gardens. It was evidently not the air of the Metropolis which poisoned them, because in several neighbouring squares large numbers of trees were growing, and were in a most flourishing condition. He and the Board of Works had set up opposite theories as to the cause of the fatality amongst the Kensington Garden trees. His theory was that the Board of Works had allowed builders in that district, when digging up foundations for new houses, to remove the clay to Kensington Gardens, and place it over the roots of the trees. The theory of the Board of Works was that the trees had suffered from defective drainage, and that great improvement would be observed now that the drainage had been in some degree attended to. He (Sir George Campbell) was convinced that there were large tracts upon which the trees were dying, which never could have been affected by the overflow of water from the pond. He should very much like to know if the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) could tell them if there had been any perceptible improvement in the condition of the trees in consequence of the drainage operations which had been carried out, as he did not himself believe it to be the case. He was under the impression that the trees in those parts were still dying. If the Park were private property, its owner would not be, as the Government were, content to sleep on the matter and allow the thing to drift. He would not allow the Park to continue in such a state, but would take measures to correct any evil which he believed to exist. Nothing had been done to examine the roots of the trees really to find out if the seat of the difficulty lay there. At any rate, he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would be able to give them some satisfaction in this matter. He also trusted that something would be settled in regard to the Roehampton Gate of Richmond Park. Richmond Park, as everyone knew, was a magnificent Park, but the access to it was not sufficient, and anything which could be done to improve it would be of enormous benefit to the people of London.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, there had been one very important and striking omission from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works. He (Mr. Pickersgill) had asked him why the public were excluded from Hampton Court Park, and in reply the right hon. Gentleman had given them no reason, but had contented himself with the observation that the public never had been admitted. That was not the question. He did not ask whether they had been admitted in the past, and if not what was the reason of their exclusion; but what he asked was, why they were not admitted now? He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would give something like a satisfactory assurance on the matter now, and if he did he (Mr. Pickersgill) for one would not press the subject to a Division.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that as to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) no doubt his complaint as to the state of the trees in Kensington Gardens had for a long time possessed some considerable foundation, and he (Mr. Plunket) regretted it as much as the hon. Member did. The matter was considered some years ago by a small Committee, of whom Mr. Littler, of the Office of Works, was one, Sir James Cooper was another, and a third gentleman whose name he had forgotten, but who, he thought, was connected with the Office of Woods. This Committee went very carefully into the subject of the mortality amongst the trees, and the conclusion they came to was that in the first place the trees had been planted too closely together originally, and that in other respects they had not been well planted. In the next place they came to the conclusion that owing to the saturation of the soil from excess of water a great many trees, as they expressed it, "stood in water." Now, the hon. Member asked him whether the improvements which had been effected at the Round Pond had been productive of good results. He was afraid they had not produced much good effect in the Garden generally; but he was informed that in the immediate vicinity of the Pond the trees were improving considerably. He feared the evil complained of was one which could not be altogether remedied or overcome; but the Board of Works were doing their best to grapple with it. They were removing some trees in those places where they were overcrowded, and were making some drains, and he believed that would do something to prolong the existence of some of the older trees. Whilst they were doing this they were planting young trees from time to time, and in all such cases they took the greatest possible care that the trees were put in under favourable circumstances for their growth and development. He might illustrate what he meant by saying that the trees in Bird Cage Walk, and in the Mall at St. James's Park, had undoubtedly suffered from the great carelessness with which they were originally planted. They were continually planting new trees in those places, and whenever they did so they made every provision to increase the chances of the trees growing well. They only chose trees of the best kind, and had them planted under the best scientific conditions. He could assure the hon. Member that it was not because the Board of Works had not very carefully considered the question that they had not been successful in putting a stop to the mortality amongst the trees in Kensington Gardens. He was afraid there was not much to be hoped for in regard to the older trees; but he thought that the trees they were now planting—together with such as could be rescued of the old ones—would benefit by the more careful treatment they were now receiving. As to the question regarding Hampton Court Park, he could add nothing to what he had already said. It had always been reserved, and it must be remembered that it was situated in the centre of a great deal of open space which was available for the public. He had said already that the matter was now being considered, but he could not give hon. Members any pledge as to what would be done as the result of that consideration.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the trees in Kensington Gardens; but he did not think the evil to which he had referred arose from the cause pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman. Having watched for a long time the decay of the trees, whether they were young or old, and whether originally overcrowded or not, and having heard from some people that the only possible theory to account for that was the super-saturation of the soil with moisture to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, he (Sir George Campbell) gathered that the real cause of the mischief had not yet been ascertained, and that there was still something to be found out. He acknowledged that the authorities the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned as having formed a Committee were very high authorities from a scientific point of view; but, at the same time, he could not help observing that these gentlemen did not seem to have mastered the whole difficulty, and he hoped experts would still continue to give attention to the subject.

MR. CHILDERS said, that one expression had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works on which he thought he might ask for some further explanation. The right hon. Gentleman had said that Hampton Court Park had been "reserved" from the public. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that it had been legally reserved from the public, and that it was not in the power of the Office of Works, in conjunction with the Treasury, to make arrangements for the public to use the Park? He (Mr. Childers) was under the impression that there was no such legal reservation, and that it was purely a matter for the Office of Works. If that were so, "reservation" was hardly the word to use, and he hoped they would see the land given up for the use of the public.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he wished to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to the fact that last year objection was taken to this Vote on the ground that the public were excluded from Kew Gardens until 1 or 2 o'clock in the day. The right hon. Gentleman had then promised to take the protest which was made into his serious consideration, and see if it were possible to admit the public into Kew Gardens at an earlier hour. Nothing, however, had been done in the matter, and unless some promise were given that a little more attention would be paid to the wish of the public in that direction he (Mr. Cremer) should certainly move to reduce the Vote by £1,000. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee whether he had directed inquiries to be made in this matter; and, if so, what was the result of those inquiries? Another complaint made last Session, and which he (Mr. Cremer) wished to repeat now, was that the public were not allowed to take even the smallest parcel into Kew Gardens. The public were obliged to leave even small handbags at the entrance of the Gardens, lest they might contain anything in the shape of—not explosive matter—but in the shape of food or drink. There seemed to be on the part of officials a fear that the public would regale themselves after they had entered the sacred precincts of the Gardens. It was pointed out last year that there was a part of the Gardens into which the people might be allowed to carry parcels for the purpose of providing themselves with refreshments, and where, if an empty bottle or two, or a few pieces of paper, were left lying about, it would not injure the Gardens or produce an eyesore—he alluded to that part of the Gardens on the bank of the Thames. If the Board of Works could not see their way to allowing the public to make use of this part of the Gardens for refreshment purposes, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government would seriously consider the desirability of erecting in Kew Gardens for the convenience of the poorer classes of their countrymen, some such building as was to be found in Regent's Park. There was a building there which was admirably conducted where refreshments were to be obtained at a very small cost. It seemed to him (Mr. Cremer) that if they had a building of that kind in Kew Gardens it would get over the difficulty to which he alluded. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention had been directed, or whether inquiries had been made first of all in regard to the exclusion of the public from these Gardens up to the late hour to which he had alluded, and why they could not be admitted at 11 or 12 o'clock in the day? Eleven o'clock was late enough he thought. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would also say whether the public would be allowed to carry parcels into the part of the Gardens to which he had referred; and, if not, whether the Government would not erect there a building in which refreshments might be obtained?

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he should not have risen again except for an answer which just now fell from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works. The right hon. Gentleman had seemed to drop some dark hints to the effect that some higher powers were concerned in this question of the admission of the public to Hampton Court Park. He (Mr. Pickersgill) however, submitted that the matter was under the control of the Office of Works. If the right hon. Gentleman would go down to the Park, he would find, from the notice board, that admission to the Park was subject to the Rules and Regulations made under the Parks' Act of 1872. The Regulations there made prescribed that the Park should be open to those who had the licence of the Office of Works. Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman had only to extend the licence to the entire public, and the whole thing was done.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that as to what had fallen from the hon. Member (Mr. Cremer) with reference to Kew Gardens, he could assure him that since the debate referred to, he had gone very carefully into the questions raised, as he had promised to do; and, as a matter of fact, he would inform the hon. Member that the public were now admitted to the Gardens at 12 o'clock on ordinary days. The reason why they were not admitted earlier was that the public generally—that was to say, the people who came from a distance to see the Gardens—hardly began to arrive until that time; and the only conflict of interest was between the people who lived in the immediate vicinity and the students of botanical science. The Board of Works thought it right that there should be a certain period of the day during which these students should have an opportunity of pursuing their studies in seclusion and quiet. He (Mr. Plunket) did not think there was any grievance to any extent felt even by the people who lived in the neighbourhood. On Bank Holidays the Gardens were open at 10 o'clock, and, he was glad to say, were largely availed of by the public. The other question the hon. Gentleman had referred to, and which was also spoken of when the Estimates were under consideration last year, was a more difficult one. It had been found in practice that if they once began to allow the public to take provisions into the Gardens, it very greatly interfered with the amenities of the Gardens, and that it required additional care and expense in looking after the place in order to keep it in proper and seemly order. As to the hon. Gentleman's other suggestion, that a refreshment kiosk should be erected, that was undoubtedly a subject well worthy of consideration. The general impression had been that the fewer of those establishments that were set up in the Public Parks the better. However, he would promise to give the matter his careful consideration.

MR. CREMER asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would state to the Committee whether any record was kept of the number of students in botanical science who visited Kew Gardens for the purpose of studying in the early part of the day? Could the right hon. Gentleman inform the Committee as to the number of students who visited the Gardens in the course of a day or a year?

MR. PLUNKET said, he dared say it would be very easy to obtain such a list; but he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the privilege of studying in the Arboretum in Kew Gardens, which was, perhaps, the finest in the world, was highly valued by a large number of students and others.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state the number who visit the Gardens on a Sunday morning?

MR. PLUNKET: I can easily find out. I am not sure that any record is kept; but I know that these people go there in considerable numbers.

MR. CREMER asked, whether he was to understand that the right hon. Gentleman would take the question of the erection of a refreshment kiosk into his consideration? He (Mr. Cremer) had heard a cheer some time ago when it was stated that it would be difficult to allow the public any part of Kew Gardens for the purpose of picnics. Well, it might be all very well for hon. Members to object to the public having this privilege when they themselves could drive down to the Gardens in their carriages, take a stroll through the grounds, the hot-house, and the Arboretum, and drive home again to partake of the sumptuous repast there awaiting them. But there was no such luxury for the enormous majority of the visitors to the Gardens. They were poor people, who found it necessary to carry their provisions with them, and it was on behalf of these that he was pleading to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would consider the point which he (Mr. Pickersgill) had raised with reference to Hampton Court Park?

MR. PLUNKET said, he was aware that Hampton Court Park was placed in the Schedule to the Act of 1872; but the Park had never been used by the public.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 53; Noes 95: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 56.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £40,940, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament."

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that this year a further sum was asked to be voted under Sub-head B, in connection with the Westminster Hall improvements, and he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) whether it had been decided for what purpose the new building for which this money was asked for was to be used? In Parliament in 1885 a strong protest was made against the erection of what had appeared to a large number of hon. Members to be an altogether useless building. Before they voted any further money for the building, it was desirable, he thought, that they should know for what purpose it was to be used. To his mind, this was a useless expenditure, a waste of public money. Many hon. Members had prophesied that in all probability the time was not for distant when the building would have to be pulled down to make way for some more suitable erection. If the money were voted to-day, he should like to have some information from the Government as to when it was likely that the building would be completed?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman did not allude to Westminster Hall, when he spoke about the prophesy that this building would have to be pulled down, because he (Sir George Campbell) thought that one of the most admirable buildings in all Europe. No doubt that magnificent building would be, to a large extent, spoiled by the so-called "restoration" now going on on its western side. A great architect, under the name of "restoration," had been allowed to have his own way with it in carrying out some gim-crack ideas of his own. They were told that when the new building was completed they would get a new Grand Committee Room; but it did not now appear that they were likely to get all he would like. They were also told that there would be another practical purpose effected—namely, that hon. Members would get a shed in which to put their horses; but he did not see that that expectation was likely to be realized. At any rate, he should like to have some information on these points. He should also like to be told to what use Westminster Hall—which was the finest hall in Europe—would be turned when these building operations were finished? At the present moment the Hall was turned to no account at all. He (Sir George Campbell) wished to see it made the centre of their Parliamentary life. He wished to see it made the centre of a great many Grand Committee Rooms, and a centre of life as it used to be when the Royal Courts of Justice were held there. He hoped they would be told that these building operations would not continue very much longer, and that the House would soon know the worst of them.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, he should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to a point of some practical importance, and that was the very inadequate accommodation which there was for smoking in that House. There was, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, but one room downstairs for smoking and one upstairs; and if the right hon. Gentleman ever visited those chambers at a time when there was a full attendance he would see that they were hardly fit for human occupation. The right hon. Gentleman had been very kind to his Colleagues. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had not been able to visit the new chambers prepared for them; but he was told that almost every Member of the Ministry had a chamber to himself in which he could do almost anything he liked—in which he could even smoke if he chose. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) would venture to make a suggestion which was not a new one by any means, but one which had been brought before one of the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessors, and had been approved of by nearly every Member of the House who had considered it, and that suggestion was that the Office of Works should cover over either a portion or the whole of the centre enclosure of St. Stephen's Cloisters surrounding that part of the building now used as a Cloak Room, and that it should become a Smoking Room. There might be seats placed there, and so forth, and the alteration would be found to be a great convenience to hon. Members, especially to those who came in smoking a very good cigar and did not wish to throw it away. And, as a matter of fact, this Cloister was habitually every day used by hon. Members as a Smoking Room. If the right hon. Gentleman chose to visit it when an important Division was about to be called, he would find that there was always a large smoking company assembled there at that end of the East Cloister. A Predecessor of his right hon. Friend now in Office had had that proposal brought before him and had not disapproved of it; in fact, he had given a qualified approval of it, and had said that he had referred it to the officers of his Department, who, after consultation, had come to the conclusion that the cost would be too great. They had declared that the cost would be thousands of pounds; but he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) did not agree with that view.

He perceived that the right hon. Gentleman had afforded protection to hon. Members who drove down to the House in their carriages by constructing a glass and iron awning overhead, and he observed that that awning had cost only £300. Well, that being so, he did not think it was possible to say that the plan he was now suggesting would cost thousands of pounds. He did not think that the expense of carrying out his proposal would approximate to the sum which had been mentioned to his right hon. Friend's Predecessor. He thought that a few hundreds of pounds might be sufficient to carry out a tentative scheme in a convenient and inexpensive manner. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) ventured to put this matter before the right hon. Gentleman in the hope that he would kindly take it into his consideration, and that if next year he had the honour to hold the Office which he now filled in such a distinguished manner, and which it was to be hoped he would continue to hold, he would be able to carry out this or some similar plan. There was only one other point to which he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) wished to refer—namely, the additions to Westminster Hall, to which reference had been made by the two hon. Members who had spoken from the other side of the House. He quite concurred in the condemnation which they had expressed. Before the work which was now being carried out was commenced he had protested against it; but all that was over and done with now. The plan had been accepted, the work had been carried out, and was now near its completion. They were indebted for this great disfigurement of a noble building to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, who was First Commissioner of Works belonging to the political Party with which hon. Gentlemen opposite were connected. Those hon. Gentlemen did not protest at the time, and did not turn the then First Commissioner of Works out of Office, and they must be prepared to accept the consequences—it was no use discussing the matter now.

Mr. C. R. SPENCER (Northampton, Mid) asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if he had considered the question of the windows of the House—a question which he had put to the right hon. Gentleman the other day? As the summer was coming on, it was rather important that they should have arrangements made by which, when the windows of the House were open hon. Members sitting below them, would be saved from draughts.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, he wished to call attention to the serious condition of the frescoes in the House which had been painted by eminent artists. He would draw attention in particular to those frescoes occupying the passage upstairs leading to the Committee Rooms. They were simply dropping from the walls; and what he wanted to know was whether, if they could not be restored in some way or other, it would not be as well to remove them altogether? The two great frescoes by Maclise in the House of Lords were also getting into a bad condition. The silica in those pictures was beginning to effloresce, and a crustaceous bloom was gathering and would in time completely destroy the pictures. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works whether something could not be done to check the process of decay which was theatening the destruction of some of the most valuable pictures of our English school?

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he must move to reduce this Vote by the sum of £5,000 by way of protest against the continuance of a state of things to which he had directed the attention of the Government last year, and on which he had made remarks on two or three previous occasions. First of all, he must join with hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House in entering an emphatic protest against the building which was being erected outside Westminster Hall, and which, so far as he (Mr. Cremer) was capable of judging, was of a most hideous character when viewed from the Bridge Street standpoint. He was astonished at any Government sanctioning a structure of that character. And now, in regard to the £5,000 which he was moving, he wished to say that he had called the attention of the Government last year to the fact that there was a most objectionable system of dual control adopted in connection with this House and other Government establishments. A portion of the *employés* were paid directly by the Government, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to state for the information of the House what portion of the item under the head "Maintenance and Repairs, £8,655," was paid to the contractor, and what portion was paid to the *employés* direct? He had never yet been able to understand why any portion of the workmen about this building were employed by a contractor who was permitted to deduct from their scanty wages 1*d.* per hour. He (Mr. Cremer) had been very much astonished when he heard that this state of things existed here and in other Government buildings, and last year he had called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to the matter, and the right hon. Gentleman had promised to take it into his serious consideration, and to ascertain whether, when the contract with the contractor expired, it would be possible to place the workmen here and in other Government buildings on the same footing as the well-paid officials. The only answer which was vouchsafed or explanation tendered was that the contractors, in consideration of being allowed to make this deduction from the wages of the men—wages which were small enough in themselves, before anything was deducted from them, being only 5*d.* or 6*d.* an hour—supplied certain plant, such as brushes, dusters, steps, and trestles, things which could be obtained for £5 or £6 a-year. That was not a sufficient plea for permitting deductions to be made from the wages of the men, which reduced those wages to an amount which was scarcely sufficient to enable those who received them to live in anything like a decent manner. It was, to his mind, an unfortunate thing that they should have two classes of men about the building. It would be better that the men should be employed directly and paid directly by the Government than that a third party should be allowed to intervene, and that the Government should have no control over some of the workpeople. If he was rightly informed, the contract with the contractor expired since he brought the matter forward and received the right hon. Gentleman's promise, and that another contract had been entered into for three or four years, and that for that period these workmen were to continue to be robbed of a portion of their wages. As a protest against this state of things, and on behalf of the poorer class of *employés,* in that House and other Government buildings, he proposed that the Vote be reduced by £5,000; and when the Vote for the British Museum and the Votes for other buildings came before them, he should move similar reductions, in order, if possible, to get justice done to the poorer class of their countrymen employed in those places. If it was right that the poorer class of workpeople should have reductions of 1*d.* per hour made from their wages, it was only right that similar reductions should be made from the wages of the higher officials. Until the whole body of *employés* was put on the same footing, whether rich or poor, he should continue to make these protests.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £35,940, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Cremer.*)

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would be successful in his endeavour to see that the small pittance given to the humblest persons employed in this House was really received by them, and that no portion of it was taken away by the middleman. He (Mr. Labouchere) rose more to express his dissent from some observations which had fallen from the right hon. Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck)——

The CHAIRMAN: As a reduction has been moved as to a specific item, that item must be disposed of first. Afterwards, the hon. Member will be able to refer to any other portion of the Vote.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, he did not know whether the Chairman's ruling was that the present debate was entirely confined to the subject by the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer).

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; that is so.

Mr. PLUNKET said, the truth was that practically the whole amount for the repairs of the House was paid over to the contractors—Messrs. Mowlem, Burt, & Freeman. These contractors executed for them their repairs in this and other public buildings, and as regarded the particular charge referred to it was a matter of business arrangement between the contractors and their *employés*—the Government knowing nothing whatever of the way in which the former paid their men. The Government paid the contractors a certain sum, for which sum the work was contracted for; and having paid that—and this was a much more economical way of managing the business than doing the work themselves—they could not go to the contractor and say—"You are to pay your men so much," or—"You should increase their pay," or—"Reduce their pay," and so on. All that it was necessary to leave to ordinary laws of demand and supply, and they must leave it to the contractor to deal with the men as he thought best whom he had engaged to work for him. As he (Mr. Plunket) had said, there was no doubt in the world that in a great many cases this system of employing contractors was the most economical for carrying out the maintenance and repairs of the Houses of Parliament and the whole of the Palace of Westminster and the other buildings the hon. Member had referred to. He was afraid he must take his stand on that view of the case, and say that the system adopted was the most economical one in view of the work to be carried out, and that it was not in the power of the Board of Works to interfere between the contractor and his men. He was sure that the hon. Gentleman himself would see that the only alternative which would be open to them, supposing the arguments which were brought against the Vote were established, would be to undertake the work themselves.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had not quite met the points raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer). What his hon. Friend evidently meant was that the Government let their work at prices, and under conditions and terms, which made it impossible for the contractor to pay the current wages in the respective trades. He understood the Government had recently let a contract to a very efficient firm, so far as work was concerned, for the repair of Government buildings during the next three or four years. What he gathered from the terms of the contract was that the firm had undertaken to do the work at a scheduled price, at so much per hour. Now, the scheduled price mentioned was but little over the wage that should be paid to the workman himself, and the contractor undertook to take a given amount per cent off the contract price. That being so, it was evident that the percentage below the ordinary scheduled price must come out of the wages of the workpeople. To give an example, let him take the case of the trade with which he was closely acquainted. He noticed there was an item of £1,000 for the repair of the stonework of the Houses of Parliament; and he presumed that the contractor contracted to do the work, say at 10*d.* per hour, and that he gave so much percentage off for the privilege of having the work. The result of all this must be that the stonemasons employed about the building in repairing would receive ½*d.* or 1*d.* less per hour than they would if employed by private firms on other work. The charge he (Mr. Broadhurst) and his hon. Friends made was that by this system the Government was in reality a party to the "sweating" process, because they let their work at prices and under conditions which made it impossible for a contractor to pay the proper wage, and observe the proper rules of the respective trades. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had said that it was the most economical plan for the Government to let work to contractors. That might be so, and might be a means, of relieving the Office of Works of a certain amount of labour and of some anxiety; but there was no good and sufficient reason, either from an economical point of view or from any other point of view, why the Government should not do its own work in the matter of repairs. He noticed there was an item for the Clerk of the Works' wages. There was a Clerk of the Works attached to the Office of Works; such a man was the general supervisor of the Government works, and all that was required was the engagement of a foreman practically acquainted with the respective branches of repairs to be done, who would purchase the material wanted, and then the Government could pay the current wages to the workpeople. Some little labour would be entailed upon the

Office of Works, but there was no real difficulty in the matter. The Government were charged with the expenditure of the people's money, and they ought not, when engaging people to do a work, to be parties to a system which resulted in the reduction of the wages of many skilled artizans engaged in the different branches of the work to the extent of 1*d.* or 1½*d.* per hour. This was the point he was sure his hon. Friend (Mr. Cremer) was wishing to enforce, and it was a point which would be complained of so long as work on Government buildings was compelled to be done at a less wage than was paid in the trade generally.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that, no doubt, there was much in what his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had just said; but he did not think the hon. Gentleman had quite caught the point raised by the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr Cremer). The real point was that the Clerk of the Works engaged a certain number of men employed about the House; but, instead of engaging all the men, he obtained a few through a contractor. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not complain of the contractor; the contractor naturally took something for his labour, and this came out of the wages of the men. The men had spoken to him (Mr. Labouchere) upon this subject, and therefore he was able to speak definitely as to the complaint which was made. It was not a very important point to anybody except the men themselves; but they undoubtedly felt the grievance very keenly. It certainly was only reasonable that the Clerk of the Works should engage all the men employed, and that was the point which his hon. Friend (Mr. Cremer) wished to raise.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, he was afraid he could not add much to the argument he had already submitted to the Committee; but he must point out that the remarks of the hon Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) went to the root of competition. The Government were satisfied that it would be far more expensive for them to do the work themselves. For instance, directly they did so they would have applications for sick leave and for pensions which would assuredly be made under such circumstances. Being satisfied that that would be a much more expensive way of doing the work than employing a contractor, he repeated that they had no option but to put up the contract to competition. Having satisfied themselves, as they had done, that the firm who obtained the contract was respectable and solvent they must leave the firm to deal with its own *employés.* It was quite true that some men were employed directly by the Office of Works for special services; but that employment was restricted as far as possible, because they were satisfied that it was a cheaper, and a more economical, and a better way to have work done by contractors. They would regret exceedingly if the contractor took any advantage of his workmen and screwed down their wages improperly; but, as he had already said, they could only take precautions against such a condition of things by making contracts with respectable firms. Beyond that he was afraid they could not go. If there were any unfair conditions in the employment the question must be settled between the contractor and the people employed.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had even now answered the point raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer). He was much surprised at the remark of the hon. Member for Nottingham, and thought there was no doubt that work could be done much more cheaply by contract than by the Government; but that was not the question raised by the hon. Gentleman. He (Sir John Lubbock) did not wish to press for a further answer now; but if the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to give it, perhaps he would undertake to look into the matter, and go further into it when the question came again before the House.

Mr. CREMER said, he was afraid that he could not accept such a vague promise as satisfactory, because something more than a hint was given last year that this matter would be enquired into; and, if he was rightly informed, the contract had been renewed since last year. He did not complain of the contractor. It was very natural the contractor should seek to recoup himself by making reductions in the wages; but what he did was to blame the Government for allowing the system to continue. The tendency of the age was to get rid of middlemen, and to prevent working men having deductions made from their wages, and yet they had the Government countenancing the very system which had been condemned almost universally, not only among the working classes of this country, but of every other country. If there was any advantage in the employment of a contractor the system should be adopted all round. He did not see why they should have any men employed upon this or any other Government building who were engaged through contractors. Why should the principle be confined to the poorer class of working men; why should it not extend to the wealthier office holders? He should continue to enter his protest against the present state of things, and as the only effectual way of doing so was to move a reduction he was afraid he must persist in his Motion.

Mr. PLUNKET apologized for not having quite caught the point raised by the hon. Gentleman. He did not think that the question was raised in the same way last year as now; but certainly he would undertake to inquire into the matter and see how it really stood, and if there was any injustice to have it put right.

Mr. CREMER said, he had such faith in the right hon. Gentleman's sense of justice that he would accept the pledge given to the Committee and withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that before the Amendment was proposed certain questions were asked him by hon. Members which he desired to reply to as briefly as he could. In the first place, the old argument was glanced at as to the propriety of what was called the restoration of Westminster Hall. As to the new buildings which had been built outside Westminster Hall in place of the Law Courts, if he were disposed to shelter himself behind the authority of Parliament, he might say that the work had been done as the result of the Report of a very strong Committee which sat in 1885; and the Report of that Committee, after being criticized as all matters of Art were liable to be criticized, was finally approved by the House. He was asked how soon they were to know the worst. There was no worst about it. He was very glad to know that hon. Members would very soon know the best of it, because by the end of this or the beginning of next year the work would be completed. Speaking for himself and for persons of authority whom he had been able to consult, he should say that the result would exceed the expectations of those who were in favour of the plans which had been carried out. He believed that the buildings would be a very stately and handsome addition to Westminster Hall. He believed they would be thoroughly in character with the old Hall, and that they would, as a work of Art, be considered on all hands to be a great success and triumph. He might mention one interesting circumstance as illustrating the fidelity with which Mr. Pearson had endeavoured to restore the Hall and its surroundings to what existed formerly. The staircase by which it was proposed that access should be given to the new buildings from Westminster Hall was greatly criticized some time ago, and Questions were asked of him in the House as to whether the Government were going to consent to such a disfigurement of the old Hall? The answer he then gave was that it was only proposed to reinstate a staircase which it was believed had existed in the old Hall. When the workmen in the course of their labours proceeded to break the hole through the wall to make the access from the Hall to the new buildings, they absolutely found the opening for a staircase which had been filled up. He believed that a great deal of other criticisms urged against Mr. Pearson's plan would fall to the ground as it had done in this particular instance. He was asked some practical questions. For instance, he was asked whether there would be a Committee Room or anything worth having at all? As a matter of fact, there would be an extremely handsome room there, a very large room and one capable of accommodating a Grand Committee. He had not measured it; but he believed it would be as large as any room now employed for the purposes of Grand Committees. He was sure that when the work was complete it would be found not only architecturally a great success, but would add a large and valuable space to their overcrowded premises. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) had questioned him about the frescoes. He was afraid that some of the frescoes were unfortunately gone past redemption; but he had asked an officer of his Department to go very carefully into the matter, and see what was still capable of being preserved, and to estimate the expense of the preservation if it was possible. Then came the most vexed of all questions, that of additional accommodation for smokers. It was one with which he personally felt great sympathy; but he could only say, in answer to his right hon. Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr Cavendish Bentinck), that the proposal he had made came to him for the first time. As he understood the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, it was that glass should be placed over the Cloisters outside, or rather in the square along the sides of which the Members' Cloak Room runs. He (Mr. Plunket) would find out what the expense would be, and he would also sound the opinion of the House generally upon the subject; but he was inclined to think that, besides being very expensive, judging from the glass covering which had been put up in the Members' Courtyard, it would hardly be satisfactory unless they covered in the whole Courtyard referred to by the right hon. Member with glass. The hon. Member for Mid Northamptonshire (Mr. C. R. Spencer) had spoken about the opening of the windows so as to avoid the draughts which sometimes descended upon Members, especially those who sat upon the Front Benches. The system of ventilation in the House was an artificial one; in hot weather cold air was sent from underneath the floor. In hot weather it was, first of all, passed over blocks of ice in the regions below; and if Members would have a little faith, and if the windows were allowed to remain shut altogether, the House would be found much cooler than if they were open. He had, however, asked for a report from the gentleman charged with the ventilation of the House.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he thought there was a great deal too much artificial air in the House. Certainly God's air was preferable to the air artificially created. As to the alterations in Westminster Hall, there was no use in crying over spilt milk; the money voted was gone. He was glad, however, to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that, even if the architecture was defective, they were to have one Committee Room. He could not help thinking that the site ought to have been used for the creation of a number of large Committee Rooms; in which case they might have had the physical or material means of dividing the House, and Westminster Hall itself might have been turned to great account. Situated, as it would have been then, between the House of Commons and the Committee Rooms, Westminster Hall might very properly have been regarded as a centre of the political life of the nation.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) that the facilities for smoking in the House of Commons were quite inadequate. The right hon. Gentleman proposed that they should have an additional Smoking Room below. By all means let them have it, but also let them have a fair and reasonable Smoking Room on this floor. That certainly they had not got at the present moment. The Committee would remember that originally they had a Smoking Room which was still used for Members and Strangers down below. They thought it would be desirable to have one nearer to this Chamber, and it was proposed that they should be given the Tea Room. The Tea Room would have been given up to smoking had it not been for the late Mr. Beresford Hope, who objected to the conversion. That right hon. Gentleman said he sometimes went into the Reading Room, and there was such respect for him that a good deal of attention was paid to his objection, and it was agreed that the Tea Room should not be touched. Last Session, however, a second Smoking Room was obtained from the House of Lords. The House of Lords did not use the room, and, with a spirit which he could only respectfully qualify as a "dog in the manger" spirit, the House of Lords had deprived them of the room in question, and now they were driven back to the temporary room which was given to them while some other arrangement was made. This, he thought, ought to be taken into consideration by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). Either they ought to have the Tea Room, which was a very large room, and the tea people sent to the present Smoking Room, or same other arrangement should be made. He did not care where the room was got, but in time a crushed worm would turn. It was recognized that in every public assembly smokers had their rights. He could assure the Chairman that if they had proper Smoking Room accommodation it would lead very much to the peace and quiet of the House. There were a great many Members who felt soothed if, during a debate, they could indulge in tobacco smoking; he (Mr. Labouchere) always returned to the House in a calmer and more agreeable spirit after a cigar, and he was sure there were a great many Members in the same position as himself. He believed that if they had really good Smoking Rooms attached to the building the debates would be so much shortened that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) would hardly ever have to move the Closure. Was it not perfectly preposterous that they should go on year after year spending money in tinkering up this Assembly, and yet that there should be only room for about one-third of the Members? It had been suggested that there should be a new Chamber; Committees had sat upon the subject. He had looked over the Reports of the Committees; but he had not found that any single architect had ever suggested a plan by which every Member should have a seat on the floor of the House. The House had changed very much of late years; Members attended to the Business far more than they formerly did, and now that the hours were shortened they would attend even more regularly. At present, when there was a great debate expected, there was great hurrying and scurrying on the part of private Members to obtain seats. Private Members got no sympathy whatever from the occupants of either of the Front Benches. Those Gentlemen had their seats reserved for them; they did not come down to prayers. He had to come down to prayers every day. It might be said that it was a good thing to pray; but none of the Ministers and ex-Ministers ever thought of attending prayers. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Oh, oh!] He did not think there was a single Member of either of the Front Benches who attended prayers. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Oh, oh!] The right hon. Gentleman evidently did pray, but he was the only Member of the Front Bench who did. No Ministers ever came down to prayers. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Yes; they do.] As a matter of fact, how many times in the course of the Session did the right hon. Gentleman himself come down to pray? He had not had the advantage of praying with the right hon. Gentleman. He appealed to any private Member of the House whether it was not a fact that during prayers the two Front Benches were entirely empty? He only said that to prove that Members were obliged to come down to prayers solely in order to obtain a seat. At present the House met at 3 o'clock, an hour earlier than formerly; many Members were engaged in business, and often, if they knew they would be able to get a seat, they would not come down, say, till half-past 4, when Business would be practically under weigh. The obligation imposed upon a Member to come down at 3 o'clock greatly encroached upon his business day. With all respect to the architects, he asserted that there was nothing easier than to make a Chamber, not much larger than the present Chamber, which would give a place to everyone. Architects were the bane of business assemblies. He admired the late Mr. Ayrton for many things; but he admired his Post Office more than anything else. When he built the Post Office, he called together a number of architects and other people, men of science and of æsthetic tastes, and he said—"You have Greek architecture, and Roman architecture, and Gothic architecture; but this is neither Greek, nor Roman, nor Gothic—this is the Post Office, and this is Post Office architecture." If they could only get House of Commons' architecture applied to the House, he (Mr. Labouchere) was certain that, without making the House very much larger, without destroying its acoustic properties, they could make it sufficiently large to give every Member a seat. He asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) whether he was prepared to agree to a Committee to look into the matter? The question was one which concerned a great number of Members, and they were anxious to have the matter discussed, and know clearly and definitely, firstly, whether it was possible to make a House, as he asserted, not very much larger than the present one, capable of accommodating all the Members; and, secondly, whether it would be possible to do this without very much expenditure?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that he should be very glad to promote, as far as he could, the comfort of the smokers. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Committee Room which they had last year did not belong to the House of Commons at all, but to the House of Lords. It was clearly understood last year that the Committee Room was only a loan to them; the House of Lords very willingly gave them the use of the room, because it was not wanted for Committee purposes. The use of the room by smokers depended very much on the state of the Committee Business of the House of Lords, and he would make inquiries whether it was possible to have the advantage of the Committee Room again as a Smoking Room.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Has it ever been used as a Committee Room?

Mr. PLUNKET said, it had been so used ordinarily; it would be quite impossible for the Committee Business of the House of Lords to be carried on without the room being in almost constant employment; but last year there was not much Business for the Committees of the House of Lords, and they were able to let the House of Commons have the use of the room. He would renew the application for the room this year, and he was quite sure the House of Lords would meet them fairly in the matter. As to the reconstruction of the Chamber in which they sat, he certainly could not give the pledge the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) asked for. He did not wish to prejudice the hon. Gentleman's proposal by expressing an opinion adverse to it; but the proposal ought to be made after Notice, and to be decided by a full House. It was a very serious proposal, and would involve the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. Still, he did not desire to prejudge the question at all. If the hon. Member would place it on the Notice Paper, the whole matter might be thoroughly discussed.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, that an hon. Friend had assured him that the House could be made equal to all the demands upon it by such a small change as moving it back 20 feet on the Ministerial side. There was no doubt that the present state of affairs was very inconvenient. A good many business men found it impossible to be down at 3 o'clock in the day, and it was rather absurd to bring men down at such an early hour merely for the purpose of obtaining a seat. He desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) what had been done in regard to the matter to which he called attention some time ago—the matter of intercommunication between different parts of the House? He had often pointed out the extraordinary fact that one could learn in an office in Fleet Street more of what was going on in the House of Commons than he could in the Smoking Room, or in the Library of the House itself. If one was in the Smoking Room, a place which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) rarely frequented, he was absolutely ignorant as to what was going on in the House; but if he were in *The Times* or *The Standard* office in the City, he could, by putting his ear to the telephone, know what was going on in the House. There were many ways by which that state of things could be remedied. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) gave an undertaking some time ago that he would look into the matter, and had since led them to believe that he had succeeded in devising a plan. If he had, the result had not been seen. Could there be any arrangement made by which the telephone would be a little more accessible to Members than it was at present? He could not see why the telephone should not be brought up to some place in the Lobby, instead of being located opposite the Cloak Room. There was another point he desired to raise, and it was with reference to the accommodation of the Press in the House. At present, if a new newspaper was started it was impossible for its representative either to find a place in the Reporters' Gallery or to gain admission to the Lobby. Everybody knew that the public took a great deal of interest in the affairs of the House of Commons, which, to a certain extent, was the nerve centre of all political affairs in the country. The present system was this—that one could not now get into the Reporters' Gallery because it was full, and he could not get into the Lobby because he could not get into the Reporters' Gallery. No one was allowed to have a ticket for the Lobby who had not a ticket for the Reporters' Gallery. On a previous occasion he had mentioned the case of *The Scottish Leader*, but he believed that that had been remedied since. *The Scottish Leader* wanted to get a place in the Gallery, but the paper was told that the Gallery was full. Then the paper said—"Will you let our representative into the Lobby in order that he may be able to confer with Scottish Members?" The reply given was that the representative of *The Scottish Leader* could not get admission into the Lobby for the reason that no one was allowed in the Lobby who had not a ticket for the Reporters' Gallery. That newspaper was placed at a considerable disadvantage as compared with other newspapers by such a regulation. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make representations to the proper quarters in order to have that state of things remedied. The Reporters' Gallery was far too small, and ought to be enlarged as well as the House itself. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman had not decidedly negatived the proposal of the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); because it really did seem almost too grotesque that, year after year, they should all agree that the House was too small for the accommodation of its Members, and yet that they should do nothing to remedy the evil. That was the one Legislative Assembly in the world that had not accommodation for all its Members. If they went to the House of Representatives at Washington they found that every Member had his own desk; the seats were given out at the beginning of the year, and were allotted by ballot. The some thing occurred in the State Legislatures of every American State; even in the small State of Connecticut the same state of things prevailed in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. He was bound to say he would not like to see the American plan adopted here, because the provision of desks enabling Members to write was destructive of proper attention to the Business of the House. He thought that in some respects they had an ideal system here in having Members seated beside each other with no place to put their papers, and no place at which to write. But between that and having seat accommodation for every Member of the House there was a very great difference. He had often said that he did not know any place in the world where the means of communication between the different parts were so bad as they were in the House of Commons. Formerly, if a Member wanted to go to the Ladies' Gallery he was allowed to do so by the door at the back of the House. That, however, had now been done away with. He presumed that the Whips complained that Members were able to escape their vigilant eye by means of the back door; but if there was no objection now on the part of the Whips, he thought it would be advantageous to revert to the old plan, because one could then get to the Ladies' Gallery in about half the time he now could.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he did not think that Members were agreed that the House was too small. On the contrary, as far as experience went, the House was a very convenient size for the transaction of its ordinary Business. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had alluded to other Legislative Assemblies. He (Mr. Addison) was acquainted with the French Legislative Assembly. There every Member had a seat and a desk, and, besides that, there was a tribune which a Member must mount who desired to make a speech. The experience of such Assemblies would make one very sorry to introduce such a system here. First of all, they must recollect that they did Business in the House of Commons, and that in most of the Assemblies in which desks were provided the Business was done in Bureaus or in Committees. There would be this great inconvenience attached to every Member having his own place—a Member would have the same place throughout the entire Session; one would always be next to the same Member, and, instead of having the elasticity and the social feeling which at present prevailed, they would have a Member always sitting next to another Member whose company he might not always prefer. There would be a tendency to break up the House into cliques and sections, and to do away with that freedom and comfort which, so far as his observation went, they enjoyed at present in the House of Commons. He did not think that any individual Member had ever suffered any serious inconvenience from the arrangements as at present. Then it was suggested that the means of intercommunication between the different parts of the House should be increased. That, he thought, would lead to serious inconvenience; Members who now wanted to know what was going on had the advantage of coming to the House and listening to the discussions. They all knew that what they heard had more effect upon them than what they read. If from time to time Members could learn what was transpiring, they would not come into the House at all, and that would not be as convenient as the present system. No doubt, it was very proper that if Members were in Pall Mall or in Fleet Street they should be able to know what was going on in the House; but it was very different if a Member was in the Lobby or the Library. It would be much more pleasant, and even convenient, for a Member to come in and listen to the living voice than to read a summary of a speech.

Dr. FARQUHARSON said, he thought it was very important that every Member should have a seat, but it was of equal importance that every Member should have a locker. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, if he could not make arrangements by which each Member should have a locker?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that not long ago a considerable addition had been made to the number of lockers, and he was not aware that any further demand had been made for them. The complaint of the hon. Member came to him for the first time. With regard to the matter of intercommunication, it was quite true, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said, that the question was raised last year, and that he (Mr. Plunket) undertook to go into it. He had done so, and he had devised a plan by which an additional amount of information could be given to those outside the House who were desirous of knowing what was going on. What he suggested was an arrangement which would announce who was the last speaker, and that by some signal there should be an intimation when there had been a change. There was, however, some difference of opinion as to the desirability of establishing such communication, and until there was a decided balance of opinion in favour he was afraid it would be difficult for him to secure the sanction of the Treasury to the adoption of the plan he had devised. The proposal to have the telephone in some more convenient part of the House was suggested also for the first time, and he should not like to express any opinion on the subject until he had had an opportunity of considering the matter. He assured the hon. Gentleman that he had done all he could to promote the convenience of the members of the Press so far as the limited space of the House would allow. Not long ago the Gallery had been considerably extended, and any further extension of it would certainly infringe on the limited space at the disposal of Members. While the House remained as at present, he feared it would not be possible to hold out any hope of extended accommodation, which he would very gladly offer if he could.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he saw the difficulty in which the right hon. Gentleman was placed, and he did not wish to be unreasonable. He thought, however, the right hon. Gentleman might reconsider the question of admission to the Lobby, if that were in his Department. [Mr. Plunket dissented.] If that was not in the right hon. Gentleman's Department, he would not press the matter now. With regard to the question of intercommunication, he thought it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of providing one of the Exchange Telegraph instruments. They cost £7 or £8 a-year, and, as a tentative arrangement, one might be placed in the Smoking Room. The instruments made a certain amount of noise, not very great, that might be objected to. If it were, he certainly would not suggest its continuance. A fair summary was given of what took place almost as soon as the speaker had uttered the sentence. It was absurd that at the present moment the only means a Member had of knowing what was going on was to go to the Smoking Room, in which a summary was kept by a gentleman there of what transpired. The Exchange Company's instruments gave out a tape, and there was a fair summary, not too full, of what was going on, The right hon. Gentleman might, perhaps, be able to see his way to adopt the suggestion he had made, which would not entail any great expenditure of money.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) £2,200, Gordon Monument.

(6.) £110,629, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

(7.) £12,930, to complete the sum for Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, although he confessed that the amount of the Vote was not large, still it was just through such small leakages as this that the public money ran away. He did not understand upon what principle the Board of Works managed the supply of furniture to certain Departments. It appeared that some Departments were supplied from the Board of Works, and that others were supplied by the ordinary trade contractors. But he believed it would be much better for the public interest to have a uniform system which would throw all the Departments under one Office so far as the supply of furniture was concerned, and that the system should be more economically managed than was the case at the present moment. It must be plain to everyone that there was a fair opportunity, to say the least of it, for a good deal of waste in the matter of the supply of furniture under the present arrangements. He would have thought that, having regard to the large Vote every year for furniture for Public Departments, the estimated receipts would have been more than was stated. He saw that the estimated receipts for this year amounted only to £100. It was difficult to understand how so small a sum was shown, and he would like to know what became of the large quantity of furniture supplied to Public Departments, which should certainly be represented by a larger amount of receipts. Then, with regard to the question of contracts for the supply of furniture to Public Departments, his experience was that the whole system of Government contracts required to be thoroughly looked into. He had one or two plain questions to ask upon this subject. In the first place, how were these contracts given out? Were they thrown open to public competition; and, if not, were they thrown open to limited competition, and again, if that was not so, were they given without any competition at all? Then he asked whether these contracts were given out every year, and for how long contractors were appointed to supply the Public Departments; and he would also be glad to know whether it was a fact that one firm alone contracted for the furniture supplied for nearly the whole of the Public Departments? He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee some information on these subjects.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, that on page 23 there was a charge for the Chapter House, Westminster, including police. He asked his right hon. Friend whether or not the Government had the right to exercise any power whatever with regard to the admission of the public to the Chapter House?

The CHAIRMAN: The observations of the right hon. Gentleman are applicable to Vote 6, and not to the present Vote.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, with regard to the question of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) as to the small amount of the receipts for old furniture, that the reason why the amount was so small was because the practice was to employ workmen to repair damaged furniture as long as it was worth anything at all. When, therefore, the final repairs were made the furniture was practically of little use to anyone, and the value which was obtained and shown in the receipts was as much as the furniture was then worth. With regard to the contracts, these were made for three years at a time, because in that way the Department was able to make better terms with the contractors. The contracts were open to competition, but, up to the present time, to limited competition, because it had been found by experience that those persons who made the lowest tender did not always supply the best he might not always prefer. There would be a tendency to break up the House into cliques and sections, and to do away with that freedom and comfort which, so far as his observation went, they enjoyed at present in the House of Commons. He did not think that any individual Member had ever suffered any serious inconvenience from the arrangements as at present. Then it was suggested that the means of intercommunication between the different parts of the House should be increased. That, he thought, would lead to serious inconvenience; Members who now wanted to know what was going on had the advantage of coming to the House and listening to the discussions. They all knew that what they heard had more effect upon them than what they read. If from time to time Members could learn what was transpiring, they would not come into the House at all, and that would not be as convenient as the present system. No doubt, it was very proper that if Members were in Pall Mall or in Fleet Street they should be able to know what was going on in the House; but it was very different if a Member was in the Lobby or the Library. It would be much more pleasant, and even convenient, for a Member to come in and listen to the living voice than to read a summary of a speech.

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Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, that on page 23 there was a charge for the Chapter House, Westminster, including police. He asked his right hon. Friend whether or not the Government had the right to exercise any power whatever with regard to the admission of the public to the Chapter House?

The CHAIRMAN: The observations of the right hon. Gentleman are applicable to Vote 6, and not to the present Vote.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, with regard to the question of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) as to the small amount of the receipts for old furniture, that the reason why the amount was so small was because the practice was to employ workmen to repair damaged furniture as long as it was worth anything at all. When, therefore, the final repairs were made the furniture was practically of little use to anyone, and the value which was obtained and shown in the receipts was as much as the furniture was then worth. With regard to the contracts, these were made for three years at a time, because in that way the Department was able to make better terms with the contractors. The contracts were open to competition, but, up to the present time, to limited competition, because it had been found by experience that those persons who made the lowest tender did not always supply the best furniture, which was, of course, a very important consideration. The Department exercised a certain discretion in inviting competition from a large number of persons; the contracts were decided by competition amongst the best firms in London, but not in such a manner as to admit of anything like a ring being formed.

Mr. HANBURY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered his question as to why certain Departments were supplied by the Board of Works and others were not?

Mr. PLUNKET said, there were only two Departments which were an exception to the rule—namely, the Science and Art Department and the British Museum. The hon. Gentleman would understand that the reason why the furniture for these Departments was placed in a separate Estimate was because they might require some peculiar fittings, which were left to them to be executed in the manner considered to be most suitable. These two Departments, he believed, were the only exceptions, all the others being supplied in the way he had explained.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he could bear testimony to the difficulty which every Minister had in obtaining a supply of furniture from the Board of Works for his Office; and there could be no doubt whatever that it was the desire of the Department to be as economical as possible in this matter. At the same time, he was bound to say that the articles furnished, although very costly, were of a poor character; and he was afraid that the contracts were not made in the very best possible manner. The Secretary to the Treasury, and anyone acquainted with the furnishing of Public Departments, would know how much more sensible a plan it would be if contracts were made with a good manufacturing firm to supply sound and substantial articles; because there could be no doubt that there would be great economical advantage to the Public Service in having goods of the best quality. There was, for instance, an item of £3,700 for household articles, for cleaning purposes, &c.; and surely such things as these could be contracted for with the manufacturers, and something like uniformity of kind and quality obtained. He did not accuse the Department of any extravagance; on the contrary, as he had said, it was with the greatest possible difficulty that the smallest articles of furniture could be obtained from the Board of Works, and when they were obtained they were of such a quality that no private person would purchase with a view to economy. He thought that much good might be done if the Government invited tenders from manufacturers, and took steps to insure that the articles supplied were of first-class make.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he would like to know what steps were taken to insure the *bonâ fide* nature of the contracts? He asked whether, when furniture was required, advertisements were inserted in the public Press inviting furnishing houses to send in tenders, and on what principle those tenders were entertained by the Board of Works—that was to say, whether it was the rule in the Office invariably to accept the lowest tender? The right hon. Gentleman had stated that every effort was made to prevent a ring being formed. He had no doubt that steps of that kind were taken in the Office; but he would point out that, unless the tender was an open one, it would be very difficult to prevent the formation of the rings to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, because under the present system two or three or more houses could very easily form themselves into a ring without the knowledge of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the fact that the Government had their own workshops in which men were employed in repairing furniture. That was the first time this circumstance had come to his knowledge, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman where the workshops were situated, and also what was the number of men engaged in them? He also asked whether the men were engaged by the Department, or were supplied by a contractor, as was done in the case of the Houses of Parliament? If the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to supply this information he believed that the Committee, as well as the taxpayers outside, would be grateful.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he thought the Government would behave in an unbusinesslike spirit if they were to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). This Vote, although a small one, involved a very important principle, and he submitted that the adoption of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman would cause great discontent among the traders and dealers of the Metropolis who had to pay heavy rates. He believed that it would not be considered a fair act on the part of any Government who from an economical point of view went behind the backs of these traders and dealt directly with the manufacturers. However much they might desire economy in that House, he hoped the Government would deal with those houses who had a business reputation, and not pass them by in the manner which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer) it would be surely inconvenient if these tenders were open to every trader in the Metropolis, because there would be so many competitors, and amongst them would be a number who had not any standing in the trade and who might be tempted to offer to supply at a low price goods that would turn out to be of very inferior quality. Probably, in no case was quality the test of economy more than in that of the purchase of furniture. Surely the fair course to adopt was what the right hon. Gentleman had explained to be the practice in his Department—namely, to select those retail houses who had a position in the trade for the purpose of these competitions, and certainly he protested against the unbusinesslike —he would not say shabby—suggestion that the Government should pass by traders in the Metropolis who paid large sums in rates and taxes.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he was afraid that the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken was not very well acquainted with the method of business adopted by the Government, when he recommended that they should go to retail shops; because as a matter of fact every Spending Department of the Government went to the best market for the best article they could obtain, and they had nothing whatever to do with the question whether the contractors paid rates and taxes. The hon. Gentleman might as well recommend the Clothing Department of the Army to buy their cloth in Piccadilly, or recommend the War Office to buy their steel of private persons rather than in the Sheffield Market. It was the duty of the Government to buy their goods on the best terms wherever they could obtain them, and they had no right to take any other course.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he was somewhat surprised that the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Addison), who had not even the excuse of being a Metropolitan Member, should recommend them to buy their carpets from dealers in order to make business for the traders in London. That, however, was not the principle on which the House of Commons acted. The correct course was to go into the market, invite tenders, select those which offer the best price and quality, and then if the goods were equal to the sample accept them, and refuse them if they were not so. He protested against this monstrous theory of going to the London traders and pay extra because otherwise they would be offended. The House of Commons did not care one farthing whether they were offended or not.

Mr. HANBURY said, he hoped that the Government would be able to say that they carried out the rule of dealing only with manufacturers, and not with retail firms, because, as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had pointed out, this in the first place insured that the goods would be a great deal better, and in the next place a great deal cheaper. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had told the Committee that these contracts were open only to limited competition. He (Mr. Hanbury) thought that the House should be very chary in listening to any Minister who said that Government contracts were dealt with on that principle. He was sure that a great deal of favouritism was shown in every Government Department by the system of limited contracts, and he contended that they should be thrown open to public competition, and that the public should know more about them than they did at the present moment. Under that system it would be perfectly practicable to check undue competition. Under the system of limited competition it was impossible to know who were the contractors on the list, and it was quite probable that some firms never sent into the Government Departments any contract at all. He maintained that the whole system of contracts in these Departments required to be thoroughly looked into, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that the limited competition system would be put an end to, and the whole business thrown open to public competition, just as in the case of private contracts.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he noticed an item in the Vote for furniture for the Glasgow Cathedral. The amount was very small; but he should like to know on what principle the House was called upon to find any money and furniture for Glasgow Cathedral? He observed that there were also some small sums for the supply of furniture to the Scotch Universities. It would be interesting to know whether the Government considered themselves bound to supply furniture to the Scotch Universities, and whether these small supplies of furniture were provided under the general contract?

Mr. PLUNKET said, these contracts were arranged with the greatest care, and there was not the slightest ground for suspicion of favouritism in regard to them.

Mr. MUNDELLA pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the question of the hon. Member for North Aberdeen as to the ground on which the Scotch Universities got furniture from the Office of Works?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that there was a thing once happened in Scotland called the extinction of teinds. He had never himself been able to discover what teinds were when they existed, or why they were extinguished; but it was a Constitutional principle that this entitled Scotland to somewhat more liberal treatment, and he supposed these sums, which were not excessive, were allowed on that ground.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, it would be interesting to know who were the persons that constituted the small number that received preference in the matter of contracts, and the grounds on which that preference was given.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that he had not stated that a small number of firms were on the list, but that, on the contrary, the competition took place between a large number. There was no basis whatever for the superstructure of suspicion which had been raised upon this Vote. He could assure the Committee that the Department took every pains to get the business done cheaply and well. It was impossible, however, that, if a new table or chair was wanted, the whole trade should be invited to send in contracts. Small things of that kind were done by certain well-known firms whom the Department found by experience to give good value. When large quantities were wanted which could be contracted for as a whole, then tenders were invited, but not from a few firms. The Department exercised every supervision and restraint of undue expenditure. With regard to the workshops for repairing furniture, besides those in that House there were workshops at Somerset House, Scotland Yard, and the Law Courts, employing 16 or 17 men.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, the Committee had every reason to be thankful to the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) for raising this discussion, and he must say that the speech of the First Commissioner of Works in his opinion rather tended to confirm than rebut the complaint put forward by the hon. Member. He would cast no reflection on the right hon. Gentleman, who he was ready to admit was the very best man for the position, but at the same time the right hon. Gentleman must necessarily be very much in the hands of his advisers in a matter of this kind. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should give them a list of the firms who were favoured with these contracts, as the hon. Member for Preston had pointed out the mere fact of being a Government contractor was one of the finest advertisements possible for persons in trade, and although the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) shook his head at that statement, it was clear that the matter was regarded in that light by the traders, who advertized the fact that they were Government contractors. There could be no doubt that an announcement of that kind was a valuable one in respect of any business—equal to 10 per cent at least. He believed that the person who supplied tea to the House of Commons advertized that fact to the world, and he was quite sure that an accession of trade would result from it. It was the basis of the whole matter that by giving a contract for supplying Public Departments they conferred upon the firm who received it the most valuable consideration. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if they had unlimited competition a large number of small traders would tender, but he would point out that the goods supplied by small traders were quite as good, and sometimes a great deal better, than those supplied by large traders. Some firms only traded upon their names, and supplied goods at a much higher price than they could be purchased for at smaller places of business. The right hon. Gentleman had said that although there was no open competition, a certain number of selected firms were allowed to tender. He believed the right hon. Gentleman said the number was considerable, but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said that it should be universal, and, although the right hon. Gentleman had stated that by that system they might get bad furniture, yet he did not believe there was a manufacturing firm in the world who would be absolutely so foolish as to forfeit their chance of supplying Government Offices by sending in bad goods; but even if that should be the case, those who did so could be at once dismissed. He thought this matter ought to be probed to the bottom, as the Government in this and other Departments were acting on a false system, the evils of which, in his opinion, could only be remedied by adopting the principle of open competition.

MR. CREMER said, the First Commissioner of Works had not stated how the firms were selected.

MR. PLUNKET said, although there was a limitation, yet all firms of a proper standing who applied were of course placed upon the list, and he could assure the hon. Gentleman there was no favouritism whatever in the matter. He would look again through the list, and see if it would be to the advantage of the Public Service to extend it.

MR. MUNDELLA pointed out that in addition to the £16,000 included in the Vote then under consideration, there was in the Estimates, as shown by a foot-note, another sum of £32,000 for furniture of different Departments, making a total of nearly £50,000 altogether for Government Offices under contract with the Board of Works. This item was a large one, and would represent an amount of furniture that ought to be obtained from the manufacturers on the best possible terms.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he did not wish it to go forth to the public that £50,000 a-year was expended upon furniture in the limited sense in which the word "furniture" was used generally. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield would look at the foot-note to which he had referred, he would find an item of £9,500 for the British Museum. That sum was not for furniture in the ordinary sense of chairs and tables, and the like, but included fittings, cases, and similar things required for exhibiting the objects in the museum. Again, in connection with the Postal and Telegraph Offices there was an item of £6,130, which was also for fittings. Supposing a new office to be taken, a certain sum of money had necessarily to be spent for providing fittings, counters, and other requisites for preparing the office for the staff and for the work to be carried on there. Included in these items were the necessary cost of cleaning, repairing, and taking care of all the furniture supplied. He was not finding fault with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, but merely rose for the purpose of enabling the public to understand that the term "furniture" was not in these Estimates used in the ordinary sense.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the item was not entirely composed of what was generally understood by the term "household furniture." But, nevertheless, in the case of the Post Office, for instance, the charge went on year after year, and he was business-man enough to know that the articles might with very considerable advantage be contracted for year by year from the best firms in the wholesale trade. There was no doubt the vote for the British Museum was mainly for cases, but he remembered a time in the history of the Museum when it was proposed to buy cases at £150 each, which were afterwards supplied at £50.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, he saw no reason why contracts for the supply of furniture should be confined to London traders. The taxpayers of the country were not Londoners alone, and he did not see why any profit which might be made by the supplying of furniture to Government Offices should not be distributed among country traders. The right hon. Gentleman had not yet answered the question as to how many firms were invited to tender. The question was a very pertinent one, and the Committee would be glad to have some information upon it.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought the Committee ought to have the names of those firms. He could not understand whether the Secretary to the Treasury was ashamed of the firms or whether the firms themselves were ashamed to let it be known that they supplied goods to the public. He would point out that there were two sorts of firms—one which gave long credit and charged high prices, the other which dealt for ready money and doing a business on a very large scale and giving good value. He could not see that there was any valid reason why the names of those firms should not be known.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was not at all unwilling to give the Committee the names of the firms, but he did not carry them in his mind. With regard to the tendering by Provincial firms, he might say that the furniture was supplied as far as possible by firms in the locality in which it was required—that furniture required in London was competed for in London, and that which was required in the country was competed for among firms in the Provinces.

Mr. CREMER said, that some of the items in this Vote appeared to be old friends in new clothes. He especially asked for information with regard to the item of £3,700 for cleaning, which appeared to him to be extravagant as well as indefinite. He asked what were the articles for which this cleaning was charged!

Mr. PLUNKET said, it was impossible for him to describe, or to give the hon. Gentleman the particulars of all the articles required, which consisted of brooms and other implements.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, there appeared to be every probability of this discussion ending in air. He would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, who was a business man, as to whether, in his own business, he made out a list of firms from amongst whom alone he invited competition? He ventured to say that there was no business in the world regulated on such a principle. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had said that his suspicions were unjust, but he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that in business there was only one sound principle, and that was to mistrust everyone, unless you had a system which made dishonesty absolutely impossible. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should give the Committee an assurance that the whole question of confining contracts to a certain number of firms should be reconsidered, and that the Treasury should also consider whether they were bound by contracts entered into under the present system.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that it was the duty of the Government to see that the supplies obtained for the Public Service were good, and that they were obtained as cheaply as possible. With regard to the undertaking asked for by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), he had no objection whatever to saying that he would confer with his right hon. Friend at the head of the Department, in order to see whether it was possible to improve the system which now existed with regard to the supply of furniture.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the reply of the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly satisfactory. There was only one small point that he had now to refer to in connection with this Vote, and he asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury on what principle the advertisements inviting tenders were distributed.

The PATRONAGE SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Akers-Douglas) (Kent, St. Augustine's) said, that a list was prepared of certain newspapers in which Government advertisements were inserted, inviting tenders for the supply of articles to certain Offices. He should, on Notice of the Question, be glad to give the matter further attention. The subject was now under consideration, and it was quite possible that the other Offices would be made responsible for advertisements inserted relating to supplies for those Offices.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that a question was recently raised in the House of Commons with regard to the manner in which advertisements were distributed in Ireland. On that occasion a Circular was produced, which made a distinction in the matter of distribution of advertisements as between journals which were favourable and journals which were unfavourable to the existing Government. He now asked whether the distribution of advertisements in England was entirely free from anything of that sort?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, the one desire of the Treasury was to get newspapers most suited for the class of advertisements intended to be inserted, due regard being paid to the amount of their circulation.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked if the list ever changed?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he was not able to answer that question without Notice. The list which he found in the Office had been revised from time to time.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he wished to say a word or two on this question.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the discussion was taking a very wide range.

Vote *agreed to.*

(8.) £203,514, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, this Vote was one for public buildings, and it contained a vast expenditure for post offices all over the country. Now, he thought it a very questionable thing whether the system commenced by Mr. Fawcett of building these post offices all over the country was the right one. He (Mr. Labouchere) went into a small country town, and he found there a splendid building, far in excess of what they would think the requirements of the place demanded, with the words "Post Office" stuck up over it. Before these buildings were erected the accommodation required by the post office was obtained in houses, which were hired. He should think by enlarging such places to meet the growing requirements of the post office, even with the new parcels post, in country towns sufficient accommodation could be procured, and the country would be saved the expense of these large new buildings. It used to be said that fools built houses for wise men to live in them, and it seemed to him that that time had come again. They knew that rents had gone down in almost every country town, and also in London; and it seemed to him that it would be far better for the Government to give up as far as they possibly could this system of building their post offices, and to adopt the system of renting in these country towns one of the very many buildings which were to be found to let. There was another point to which he desired to call attention. He found that in one town they frequently saw a post office much larger and infinitely better than the post office in another town of similar size, and he also found frequently in towns of the same size that a district post office in one place was a very much finer building than that in another place, although there might be exactly the same amount of work to do. He should like the Government to give some explanation on these matters. If it was thought desirable to go on building these new post offices, on what conditions were they to be built? He thought that the same principle they endeavoured to inculcate upon the Treasury upon another Vote just now should be applied in regard to these matters. Was there any contract?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): Yes.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: There is. Then is it advertised?

Mr. PLUNKET: Yes, it is.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Then is it given to the lowest tender?

Mr. PLUNKET: Usually, but not always.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, if it was not given to the lowest tender, then they knew how these things were done, and unless the greatest care was exercised in these matters unnecessary expenditure was incurred. Where contracts were confined to a few persons, and those persons knew that they had the whole thing in their own hands, they agreed amongst themselves not to cut each other out, and in that way a great deal of money was wasted. He did not think the Government should build these new post offices at all; but if they did he questioned whether, under the existing system, they were obtaining them with their fittings as cheaply as they might be obtained. Was there any tender invited for fittings? He did not see that furniture came under this head. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) had told them that the furniture item was a very large one for public buildings, because it included fittings; but if that were the case in the present instance, the Vote would be excessively small. Then, again, he thought that £64,500 was an enormous sum to be used for adapting Coldbath Fields Prison into a General Parcel Post Depôt. What were they going to build there; was it to be a General Parcel Post Depôt for the whole country? [Mr. PLUNKET assented.] The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works nodded, so that he might take him as answering in the affirmative. But they had a Parcel Post Depôt now, he supposed, and were able to get on without such an enormous building as would be put on the site of this prison. He did not think any part of this scheme would bear inquiry, and he should like to have replies to the various queries he had put.

MR. PLUNKET said, that the process of producing a post office was this. When the Postmaster General was satisfied that the work of the post office in any place, whether in the Metropolis or the Provinces, had outgrown the accommodation provided in the existing building, he applied to the Office of Works in the first place, generally speaking, to know whether it was possible, by adaptation or addition to the existing building, to find the accommodation for the increased requirements of his department. Then a surveyor from the Office of Works, who was in charge of the particular district, inquired into the matter to ascertain whether it was possible as an economical step to provide the accommodation by enlarging the existing building. If he reported that that could be done, of course the existing building was enlarged. But if, on the contrary, the surveyor reported that it was not possible, and would not be an economical way of dealing with the matter to alter the existing arrangements, it was necessary to provide new premises, and the surveyor, generally speaking, prepared plans on—he must say—the most modest and unostentatious scale, which were submitted to the Office of Works, and afterwards referred to the Treasury. The result of the triangular duel which took place between the Post Office, the Office of Works, and the Treasury, was that a plan was approved, and tenders were invited from builders for carrying out the plans so approved of. That was the course usually adopted. He had no doubt that it would be far more expensive to change this method of proceeding and revert to the old plan of hiring premises. That was always a most expensive system—that of hiring the houses used for public offices. This, he thought, covered the whole ground of the hon. Member's remarks. When it was decided to erect a new building, very frequently delay occurred owing to the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory site.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman has made no reply as to fittings.

MR. PLUNKET said, that a certain amount had been obtained in the Vote just passed for fittings. There was in the Vote just passed an item of £6,000 for fittings in the Post Office and Post Office Telegraph Departments, and if these fittings were in the nature of structural arrangements they would be carried out under contract. Other fittings were obtained by tender, as he had explained in connection with the last Vote.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he thought it would be more convenient if they had the Postmaster General present during the consideration of a Vote of this kind. He should like to know if this system of building new post offices, instead of hiring buildings for the purpose, was now being universally adopted in this country where additional accommodation was required? Until recently retail shops had been employed as post offices in many districts, the Post Office Authorities considering that such buildings were sufficiently good for their purpose, without going to the expense of erecting new buildings. There were many towns with as large a population as 15,000 to 18,000 where the work of the post office was carried on in connection with retail shops, greatly to the detriment of comfort and efficiency. That method was one which he thought the Post Office ought to put a stop to. Then there was a great deal of extravagance in the matter of building new post offices. In the town of Birmingham, for instance, there was a Vote to be taken for the erection of a new head office there. A few years ago some £40,000 was spent in the construction of a building which was an eyesore, a squat block, one of the most ugly buildings erected in modern times. He had never seen anything surpassing it in ugliness, and he did not know anything which approached it for inconvenience. The public had to go on one side of it to obtain stamps, then to descend a steep street, very dangerous in slippery weather, to another part of the building in order to post their letters. The present Vote included £53,000 for a new head office for Birmingham. He thought a little foresight would have prevented this expenditure. Certainly, in no private concern would an expenditure of £40,000 have been incurred upon one building, and a few years later an expenditure of £53,000 be proposed for a new building to take its place. That method of spending public money ought to be checked by every possible criticism which could be brought to bear upon the Estimates in the House of Commons. That was one of the points he wished to call especial attention to. Another point was this item of £295 which it was proposed to spend on High Street, Birmingham. That, he supposed, was for the repair or alteration of some building which had either been hired or recently bought; and the item of £2,250 for Smethwick was, he presumed, for a new building?

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that before this Vote was taken there was one point to which allusion had been made in previous years, but which came out with much greater force in the present Estimate, which he thought required some explanation, and that was the extraordinary manner in which the Estimates were made for the post offices in and around London. He would take eight different examples in this Vote. There was the proposed post office at Finsbury Park, the total expenditure upon which was to be £2,500, but £5,000 had been already voted for it, and it was not finished, only £1,100 having been spent. In this case, twice as much as the original Estimate had been already voted. Just below that item there was another for the post office at Hackney. The total cost of that office was put down in the revised Estimates at £2,100, but the amount already voted was £4,200, and only £700 had been spent. Just below that, again, there was the post office at Herne Hill, in which the amount to be expended was £1,000, but already £2,000 had been voted, and £700 spent. Below that there was the case of Leytonstone, the Estimate being £2,100, and the amount voted £4,000. Nothing had been spent up to the 31st December last. In the case of the London Bridge post office the Estimate was £12,500, and the amount voted £22,000, with £3,000 spent. In the case of Wandsworth, the total Estimate was £5,000, and the amount voted £10,000, but nothing had been spent; and in the case of Wimbledon, whilst the amount estimated was only £3,000, the amount voted was £8,700, and only £500 spent. All these cases were in one district—that was to say, the Metropolitan district, and he thought some explanation was due from the Government as to why these Votes appeared in such a shape. In each case the amount spent was twice or three times the amount originally estimated. This was not a new complaint. He (Mr. Childers) complained of it some years ago, and he had expressed a hope that a remedy would be found; but, in spite of what he had said, the evil which he had pointed out was going on worse than ever. He thought the Committee were entitled to some explanation as to what official was responsible in the matter, and whether it was not possible to put an end to this inconvenient system of voting large sums and not spending them, but applying the votes to other buildings. The system was very inconvenient both to the Treasury and to Parliament, and he thought some reason should be given for the irregularity, and a promise that it should be avoided for the future.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had overlooked one rather important explanation which appeared on the face of the Estimate. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted several instances in which he had referred to the total amount voted meaning the total amount which it was intended to spend——

Mr. CHILDERS: No; I gave both the estimated cost and the actual Votes separately.

Mr. JACKSON said, that the total amount which it was intended to spend was given in the second column. The total amount voted was simply the amount of a number of Votes taken which made these large sums. The explanation was that these sums were simply sums voted and re-voted. The totals in the column in which the amount voted and re-voted were in excess not only of the original Estimate and the revised Estimate, but also of the actual cost of the work, and therefore to that extent it was somewhat misleading. It should be remembered that the gross amount that appeared in that column as voted and re-voted did not represent the actual amount spent on a particular work. The explanation of it was that at the time at which the Estimates were prepared, the Post Office had sent in a demand that they required a post office in such and such a district. As the right hon. Gentleman had truly said, this largely appeared in the London district. Well, during the last few years there had been a large extension of business, not only in the London district, but in other districts; and there had also been a large re-arrangement of business, if he might say so, and the only explanation he could give of the appearance the Vote presented was that certain post offices upon which it was expected the money would be expended in the coming financial year when the Votes were originally agreed to had not been erected. The work had been delayed for some reason or other, and the result had been that there had been several re-votes. Reference had been made to the large cost of the offices at Birmingham. Well, there was no doubt that the post office at Birmingham would prove to be an exceedingly costly business. In the first place the site had been extremely costly, and then the building would also be very costly, because the conveniences and arrangements to be made with a view to giving easy access to the railways would entail very elaborate plans. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had referred to the desirability of renting offices wherever it was practicable. He dared not appeal to the previous experience of the Chairman, but if he had been able to do so no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would have agreed that this was a subject which had been constantly agitating the minds of Financial Secretaries to the Treasury. The Post Office business was an enormously growing business. It had been largely added to during recent years by the enormous development of the parcels post work, and then, again, there was a demand which they could not complain of, on the part of the public that when they were going to build a post office in a town they should build it in the most central and most convenient place. As a rule that involved the purchase of property in a central part which was not vacant land; and very often the site that was built upon was a site with regard to which they had to pay compensation not only to the people whose houses of business they had pulled down, but also to the people whose businesses they had destroyed. He thought the Post Office could hardly resist the consideration urged upon them that the first thing to be done when a post office was erected, was the selection of the most convenient site for it. He said at once that he sympathized with the view which had been expressed by hon. Members that the expense of these buildings was growing at an enormous rate. He, however, saw no means of remedying that state of things, and he did not think the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton was a practicable one, because, in the first place, if they wanted to do their business economically, they must have a building specially prepared to suit the business they had to do, and in the next place they must have it convenient to the public, and they must have it healthy for the servants who were going to work in it. When one visited some of these post offices—as it had been his duty to do from time to time—and saw the crowded condition in which the people were working, it was quite evident that in the future the House of Commons must look to the expenditure on post office buildings as being one rather of an increasing than a decreasing character. But he could assure hon. Gentlemen that every one of these cases went through a most thorough sifting, first by the officer of the Board of Works, by whom the plans were prepared on the instruction of the

Post Office, and next by the Treasury, to which the plans and estimates of the cost were submitted; and all he could say was that, struggle as they did from time to time to cut down both the cost of the sites and the buildings, one was almost inevitably forced to the conclusion that when they were dealing with public buildings, or buildings belonging to public departments which had to be used by thousands of people, they must have regard to the convenience of the public, to the permanence of the building, and the health of the persons who were going to occupy it. If they were to comply with these conditions, it was impossible to be niggardly in their expenditure. The Committee would remember that Coldbath Fields Prison had been closed as a prison. The site, therefore, became available for some other purpose. The post office requirements in London had, as he had already said, been growing at an enormous rate. A site having been acquired, plans had been prepared for the building of a new post office at St. Martin's-le-Grand. This would be called "General Post Office North." He could not say what the cost of the building would be, because up to the present they had only acquired the site and prepared the plans; they had not got estimates for the building itself. But they had been warned for some time that a very considerable extension would be necessary for the purpose of the Parcels Post, even when the additional accommodation which was now in course of being provided had been provided. He ought to say that the building which was about to be constructed at St. Martin's-le-Grand would be largely, almost entirely, occupied for what might be termed clerical work. A very considerable portion of the parcels post work in London was carried on at the old General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, and almost entirely carried on in the basement of the building. The accommodation had become much too small for the requirements of the Post Office, and the Treasury were pressed to give sanction for the acquisition of several sites and for the provision of several buildings in different parts of London for the purpose of conducting the Parcels Post. In addition to the buildings which the Post Office had, and which were known as ordinary post office buildings, the Post Office rented several buildings. A great deal of the accommodation which they rented was at the large railway stations in London. The suggestion was made that in view of the growing business which was coming to the Post Office by reason of the Parcels Post and by reason of the peculiarly favourable situation which Coldbath Fields Prison occupied, being in the direct route to the railway stations by which the far larger portion of the parcels work from London was done, the Government should seriously consider the question of handing over the site of Coldbath Fields Prison to the Post Office authorities for the purpose of establishing there a central depôt where most of the parcels post work of London could be done. The question was very carefully considered, and eventually the Treasury came to the conclusion that the suggestion was one which ought to be adopted, and it had been adopted. He reminded the Committee of the position and the condition of the streets at the entrance to the Post Office of St. Martin's-le-Grand. Some statistics bearing upon the traffic there had been obtained, from which it appeared that as many as 700 carts engaged in parcels post work crossed the street at the entrance to the Post Office every day. Every Member of the Committee would admit at once that in the interest of the traffic of London it was extremely desirable if it were possible to remove so great an obstruction to the traffic at such a crowded part of the City. But there was another reason why the suggestion should be adopted. There were at Coldbath Fields nearly nine acres of land. The Post Office required in the first instance five acres, and the way in which the case presented itself to him was that if it was necessary for the purpose of their business to secure so large a space as five acres in one particular district of London, what would it cost them to get it. The estimated value of the site of the Coldbath Fields Prison was £100,000, or, in round figures, between £10,000 and £12,000 per acre. But he maintained that if they wanted to get five acres of land in any convenient spot for post office purposes, not £10,000 an acre, but £100,000 an acre would have been much nearer the cost. It therefore seemed to him the argument was conclusive that if the business required that the site should be given to the Post Office, the Government could not do better than hand it over. They handed the site over, and enabled the Post Office Authorities to take possession of it before the crush of business during the last Christmas season. He had heard that the convenience of dealing with the parcels post business at this particular centre and the relief given to other districts of London had been very great indeed. Indeed, one important official had said to him—"It is the best thing that has ever been done for the Post Office since I have been connected with it." The decision to hand over the site to the Postal Authorities was come to after most careful consideration. Experience had proved the wisdom of the decision. It would not only be possible in the future to concentrate all the parcels post business at this particular spot, but to utilize it for many other post office purposes, and for some telegraphic purposes. He believed it was intended, for instance, to use it as a place where all returned parcels should be dealt with, and where what were known as dead letters should be dealt with. He ought also to say there would be effected, when the scheme was complete, a considerable annual saving, because already notice had been given to the Great Northern Company that the Post Office would give up possession of a building belonging to them, and for which a rent of £800 or £900 a-year had been paid. He believed he was correct in saying that it was intended to do at Coldbath Fields work which was now done in other premises, the total rental of which amounted to more than £3,000 a-year.

Mr. WOODALL (Hanley) said, he gathered from the explanation of the hon. Gentleman that the site was at present used principally for clerical work in connection with the parcels post.

Mr. JACKSON said, that what he stated was that the building which it was now proposed to build at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and which would be called General Post Office North, would be used almost entirely for clerical work.

Mr. WOODALL asked if they were to understand that the Coldbath Fields premises would be in direct communication with the Underground Railway?

Mr. JACKSON: Not at present.

Mr. WOODALL: Is that contemplated?

Mr. JACKSON: Not at present.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, he was very sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) was not present, because he desired to urge him to reconsider the answer he gave the other day with regard to the telegraphic arrangements at St. Martin's-le-Grand. There was no doubt that the commercial men of the Kingdom were very anxious with regard to what appeared to them to be the very unsatisfactory state of the telegraphic arrangements at St. Martin's-le-Grand. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General the other day whether it was true that nearly 70 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand, and that the two top floors of the office were above the high pressure water main. The right hon. Gentleman replied that 50 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand, but that only the top floor was above the high pressure main. That was a very unsatisfactory state of things, because it was easy to conceive that if a fire occurred at the office the whole telegraphic arrangements of the country might be upset. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had said that the building was fire proof and that no alterations were contemplated. This was a favourable opportunity for drawing the attention of the Government to the fact that the telegraphic arrangements were in a very critical state. Any day might bring a disaster, and the Government might be severely blamed for not having paid attention to the matter. He urged the Government to take the matter into their consideration.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, the growth of the Post Office was a matter of such general interest and vast importance that he hesitated to criticize anything but the grants for buildings. That, however, was a point in regard to which there might be a great deal of extravagance. He rose particularly to draw attention to the item of £14,800 taken for the post office at Bristol. He understood from the account before him that £3,940 of that amount was to be spent this year. Was that so?

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he desired to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman in respect to the post office at Wandsworth. For two successive years £5,000 had been taken for a new post office at Wandsworth, but had never been spent. Last year it was said that no site could be obtained. He believed his constituents had sent in a number of sites to the Postmaster General at his request. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could say he had now selected a site.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he wished to ask how the Estimates in the cases of the 53 works referred to in the Vote were obtained? Were they obtained by open tender, and could the right hon. Gentleman give approximately the number of builders engaged upon the works? The experience of the London School Board as to the danger of allowing buildings to be constructed by two or three contractors was such that the Committee would do well to avoid falling into the same error.

Mr. JACKSON said, he could answer very satisfactorily the question the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cremer) had put. The greatest care was taken to give every publicity that tenders were invited and to secure that, if in the first instance only a small number of tenders was received, every effort should be made to obtain an increased number. He had in his mind at the moment the case of Inverness. Tenders were publicly invited, but the estimates for the work were so largely in excess of the original estimate that the Treasury refused in the first instance to sanction the amount. Further inquiries were instituted and every effort made to get additional competition. He believed that in nearly every case, unless there was some substantial reason why it should not be so, the lowest tender was accepted. In every case there was open competition, and the Department took every care that the work was efficiently as well as economically performed. He assured hon. Members that the Department was very desirous to keep as far as they could within their original estimates, but very often, even after tenders were received, it was necessary to make alterations in the plans. The hon. Member for East Bristol (Mr. Handel Cossham) had asked what amount was to be expended at Bristol in the coming year. The amount which it was expected would be expended at Bristol during the current year was £8,000—£5,400 in respect of the post services, and £2,600 for the telegraphs. He need not remind the hon. Member that that was merely a sub-division of the total sum for the purpose of keeping the accounts of the post office and telegraph services separate.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that as regards the post office at Wandsworth the Postal Authorities had not yet been able to obtain a suitable site. They were doing the best they could to get one, and were most anxious to provide new postal accommodation there. Of course, until a site had been acquired the money taken could not be expended.

Mr. KIMBER asked, how it was that £700 was expected to be expended during the current year?

Mr. PLUNKET said, the authorities lived in hope that a site would be obtained. If a site were obtained they would proceed to prepare the necessary plans at once. His hon. Friend would be the first in the interest of his constituents to require that the work should be pushed on.

Mr. KIMBER said, that £700 would certainly not cover the cost of the site required. If the authorities lived in hope of acquiring a site, why did they not take a sum sufficient to cover the cost of it?

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) wished to say, in reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer), that it was not the case that the School Board of London only employed two or three contractors, and that the result had been unsatisfactory. They formerly employed as contractor any respectable builder who got his name on the Board's list. For years they never had less than eight or 10 builders tendering for a particular school. Lately they had thrown the tenders entirely open, and it was very doubtful whether they had gained thereby. The Board Schools had been very economically built considering the accommodation they afforded and their durable character.

Sir WALTER FOSTER said, he was slightly misunderstood by the hon. Gentleman with reference to the expenditure at Birmingham. He did not complain of the amount of money to be spent, but complained of the fact that it was necessary after so short an interval to build another post office. As a matter of fact the stones of the present office had hardly had time to be discoloured by the smoke. He quite admitted that the site of the new office was one which was very valuable as regarded the convenience of the public. He hoped, however, that arrangements would be made whereby letters could be posted in the central street; that letters should not have to be taken down a back street as was originally the case in regard to the present post office. He should have been glad to have seen by the Estimates that more money was to be expended in other districts. There were many towns in which there was no satisfactory post office accommodation. In the town of Ilkeston for instance there was no proper post office. A certain sum of money might very usefully be spent in improving the postal accommodation there.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he wondered whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) ever came down the street in which Coldbath Fields Prison was situated, sitting beside the driver on the top of a 'bus—["Oh, oh!"] Yes, on the top of a 'bus, because that was the whole point. In fact, he should have asked whether the hon. Gentleman had ever done this after indulging himself rather freely at the dinner table the night before, because if he had done so he must entertain a very different opinion to the one he had expressed as to the suitability of the site of the Coldbath Fields Prison for a post office. In all London there was not a more dangerous or more appalling street for an omnibus to pass up or down than the street outside Coldbath Fields Prison. The street descended on one side almost perpendicularly, and the result was that even the most experienced 'bus driver and 'bus traveller trembled in every nerve whenever they were passing along the street. And this was the site which the hon. Gentleman calmly declared was most suitable for the purposes of a parcels post office! He did not think that in all London a more unsuitable site for the purpose could have been selected. He wondered how many Members of the House knew where Coldbath Fields was. If there were equal laws in England and Ireland, no doubt some Members on the Opposition Benches would know where Coldbath Fields was. As a matter of fact, very few of those who had not been in gaol had the least idea where Coldbath Fields Prison was. It was situated in a part of London that was very distant indeed from a large number of the railway termini. How many miles was it from the Paddington station? There were several other termini in London which were very distant from Coldbath Fields. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, by way of justifying the handing over of the site, said that if they were to ask for four or five acres of land in London, they would have to pay £100,000 an acre for it. If it would be any satisfaction to the hon. Gentleman, he would admit that to get five acres together in the City of London they would require to spend at a far greater ratio, but he did not see how that would advance the hon. Gentleman's argument. If the hon. Gentleman wanted a place cheap, and one which would require very little fitting or furniture, all he needed to have done was to have walked down Victoria Street. He would find there two large sites uncovered by any building, and which had been lying idle for 10 or 15 years. If he did not want to take a vacant space, the hon. Gentleman could have taken one or two buildings which he would have found admirably suitable for the purpose of a parcels post office. These buildings had cost £60,000 or £70,000, but he had no doubt that they could be bought with the freehold for £40,000 or £50,000. Before he sat down, he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) upon what principle the advertisements for tenders were distributed. He understood that the Patronage Secretary drew up a list of newspapers in which advertisements should be inserted, and sent it to the different Departments. How did such a system work? The newspapers were chosen mainly out of regard to political considerations. That was an altogether false principle in regard to business, and especially in regard to the business of advertising. The fact was that one guarantee a newspaper had for getting advertisements was that it was the best medium for making known to the public the facts contained in the advertisements. Circulation was the main test, though not always so, because a trade journal with a comparatively small circulation might be a better medium for advertising than a newspaper with a large circulation. If the head of a Department had to issue an advertisement relating to building, he naturally wished to put it in a paper through which it would reach the largest number of persons engaged in the building trade. The Minister selected a paper, and going to the Patronage Secretary said—"I want this advertisement put in such and such newspaper." The answer he would probably receive was—"That cannot be, because the paper is not on my list." If the Minister asked to see the list, he would find on it a number of small, wretched, moribund newspapers, which were, perhaps, not seen by one-tenth the number of persons who saw the paper in which he wished to insert the advertisement. He did not say this from a Party point of view at all. He believed there was no difference between the Patronage Secretary of the Liberal Party and the Patronage Secretary of the Tory Party. They both did what they considered best in the interest of their Party. But the system was an extremely bad one, and ought at once to be put an end to. The reason why this was more inexcusable now than at any other time was that they had in the Parliament of 1885 an eager discussion with regard to certain sums placed at the disposal of the Patronage Secretary. The Liberal Government was then in power, and the late Mr. Peter Rylands—who was a severe economist—protested against this money being left in the hands of the Patronage Secretary. It then turned out that the money was spent to a certain extent for electioneering purposes. With universal assent the money was taken from the disposal of the Patronage Secretary, because the state of things was regarded as an anachronism for which there was no excuse. If they used the advertisements of the State for the purpose of bolstering up moribund newspapers of their own particular side, they used the public money of the country for Party and political purposes. In the first place, he desired that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury should give them the list of the papers which were so highly favoured by the State as to have a monopoly of the public advertisements; and, in the second place, he should be glad if the hon. Gentleman would inform them on what principle the list was made up.

MR. PLUNKET said, that perhaps it would narrow the discussion which had been very widely started by the hon. Member if he said that so far as the advertisements touching the Estimates they were now considering were concerned—the advertisements which were under the control of the Office of Works—the Department were not entirely guided by the list which was sent to them from time to time by the Treasury. They took the advice of the Surveyor of the district where the buildings were situated as to the papers in which it was most desirable to advertise, and if by any chance a newspaper recommended by the Surveyor did not appear on the Treasury List, the Office of Works would insert the advertisement in the newspaper all the same. Advertisements were given to newspapers entirely independently of politics.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, that the alpine descent at Coldbath Fields, which was referred to by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was being remedied. The valley was being bridged over by a new street running to the "Angel" at Islington from the Holborn Town Hall. As regarded the general position of the site, in his opinion no better spot could possibly have been selected, having regard to the great railway systems in the immediate vicinity. It suited the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) to ignore the fact that within 200 yards of Coldbath Fields there were the termini of three great railways—namely, the Great Northern, the Midland, and the London and North-Western. He (Mr. Isaacs) congratulated the Post Office upon having the good sense and the good fortune to acquire so eligible a site for the Parcels Post Office.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Does the hon. Gentleman mean to say that the Midland is within 200 yards of Coldbath Fields?

MR. ISAACS: It is certainly within 300 or 400 yards of the site.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, there was a great increase in the Estimates this year for buildings. He should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) had been in his place to defend, if by any language it could be defended, this most important item of expenditure, which was growing at an alarming rate, and, he believed, growing out of all proportion to the increased revenue which they derived from it. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) had bewailed the very heavy cost of buildings, but had said the inflation of the total cost was due to the very high price which was to be paid for sites. Then the hon. Gentleman said it was necessary for the post office business that sites should be selected in very expensive districts. Of course, due weight must be given to that consideration; but he had some ground for believing that in some cases prices had been paid for sites which need not have been, and which ought not to have been, paid. He suggested that in the future re-arrangement of the Estimates the cost of sites should be given separately.

Mr. JACKSON said, the cost of sites was set forth separately.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he did not allude only to the Vote now before them. There was only one other remark which he desired to make, and it had reference to the Coldbath Fields site. As he understood, the Post Office had had a windfall this year in the shape of a free site. Of course, so far as the taxpayer was concerned, there would be no advantage in one Department paying over a sum of money to another Department; but from another point of view it was extremely important that the value of the site should appear in the post office accounts, because if it did not appear they would be misled in comparing one year with another, and the right hon. Gentleman the present Postmaster General might receive credit for economy which he might not deserve.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that the discussion of this Vote was a perfect waste of time; the debate was a farce. He asked any hon. Member who doubted his assertion to look at pages 37, 38, 39, and 40 of the Estimates. These were four pages which affected to give the House information as to why money was wanted and how it was spent. There was a column for the original Estimate; there was a column for the revised Estimate in each case; there was a column for the gross amount of the previous Votes and re-Votes; and there was a column for the total amount expended up to the 31st of December, 1887. Upon looking down these pages they found that every case in which money had been expended up to the 31st of December, 1887, represented a re-Vote—that was to say, that in the first year there was no expenditure at all in connection with the item which Parliament was asked to sanction. The sums were voted again, and then a sum of money was spent. But they had a very large number of cases last year set forth in detail, indicating what the Post Office intended to do with the money the House granted, and none of that money, or almost none, had been spent in the financial year. The money which was expended up to the end of December, 1887, was money which had been voted and re-voted. The whole thing was a perfect farce. The fact was, that the House was treated to an elaborate list of sites and of projected buildings, and it passed some hundreds of thousands of pounds. The money was handed over to the Postmaster General; but the right hon. Gentleman and the Post Office officials never paid the least attention to the statements in the Estimates. If it suited them to do so they proceeded with the buildings which were mentioned in certain cases in the Estimates; but if they found in the course of the year that certain other sites were more eligible or that certain other buildings were required, they felt perfectly at liberty to spend the money granted by Parliament upon them. It was just as well the proceedings of the Committee should be of a practical and serious nature. It would be business-like to say—"We will give the Postmaster General £100,000 to spend on buildings which the circumstances of the moment may prove to be useful or necessary or best;" but to set this list before the Committee as anything like a trustworthy list of the ways in which the sums of money would be expended, was merely throwing dust in the eyes of the public. What he proposed was that the Committee should not waste any more time over these details, because they could not possibly do any good. The Post Office Authorities had spent money on sites and buildings not mentioned in the

Estimates. There never had been Estimates submitted to the House which bore on the face of them so many proofs of careful pruning as these did; it was perfectly clear that these Estimates had been subjected to a most vigorous examination by the Secretary to the Treasury; but, at the same time, he regretted the blot he had mentioned and which had been perceptible for years was perceptible in the present Estimates.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought the Committee were entitled to an answer to the allegation made by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). The statement made by the hon. Gentleman was that it had been the habit of the Committee to vote sums of money for sites and buildings, but that if the Post Office did not choose to erect the buildings it spent the money in erecting other buildings. If that be the case, it was obvious it was a perfect farce, nay, an insult to the Committee, to submit Estimates for specific buildings. Before they voted this money, the Committee ought to require an assurance from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that if the money was not spent as intended it would not be expended at all.

Mr. JACKSON said, he could, without the slightest hesitation, give that assurance. The hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had been pleased to say that the present Estimates bore evidences of having been carefully considered. He thought he could satisfy the hon. Gentleman that if the practice which he mentioned was ever in vogue it was not likely to be put in force during the coming year at any rate. The hon. Gentleman would remember that the question came up before the Public Accounts Committee, and that he (Mr. Jackson) endeavoured to explain to the Committee some of the measures taken to secure that the expenditure was not only kept within the limit of the Parliamentary Vote, but also kept to the purposes of the Parliamentary Vote. As a matter of fact, every item of expenditure must come to the Treasury for sanction, and one of the first questions he required to be answered before he gave consent was—"Has provision been made in the Estimates for this expenditure?" The hon. Member would admit that if that practice was carried out, expenditure must be kept within the amount voted by Parliament, and devoted to the purposes for which Parliament intended it. He assured the hon. Member that the greatest care was taken to ensure that expenditure was kept within the amount sanctioned and appropriated to the purposes intended.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was afraid the answer of the hon. Gentleman was calculated to lead the House to suppose that he had stated what he had no warrant for. He admitted that Treasury sanction was obtained to every building, and that the total Vote was not exceeded. But the buildings specified in the Estimates were not proceeded with. Totally different works were undertaken, completed, and paid for within the financial year, to those mentioned to Parliament. He did not complain that the Vote was exceeded. He did not complain that any money not voted by Parliament was spent by the Post Office or the Inland Revenue or the Customs Departments buildings; but what he contended was that the elaborate statement of detail which was submitted to the Committee was perfectly untrustworthy as to the way in which the money was likely to be spent.

Vote *agreed to.*

(9.) £23,875, to complete the sum for County Court Buildings.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £12,756, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings."

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he rose to move the reduction of the Vote, of which he was sorry that a considerable portion had been already taken. This money was asked for the Metropolitan Police Courts. In many towns in the country the Police Courts were paid for from the local rates, and he could see no reason why those towns should pay not only for their own but also for the Police Courts of the richest City in any country of the world. They had a Local Government Bill brought in, and he had looked to see whether there was in it any arrangement for the cost of these Courts being thrown upon the rates of the Metropolis; but he found no such provision, although in that Bill it was proposed to give far more relief to the ratepayers than had been given before. He had always been told, when this question was raised on previous occasions, to wait until the Local Government Bill for London came in, that the charge was monstrous, and that the cost of these police buildings was to be thrown upon the Metropolis. But the Local Government Bill had been brought in, and its operation applied to London, but there was nothing in it to throw this expense on the Metropolis. There was an additional reason why this Vote should be refused. The Treasury, feeling that the Vote was an injustice, tried to keep it down to the lowest possible point, and the consequence was that the Police Courts were a positive disgrace to the Metropolis. Prisoners, both male and female, were put together, and the cells were overrun with vermin. Hon. Members who represented the Metropolis, and the public also, might be assured that they would not have good Police Courts until the Metropolitan districts paid for their Police Courts from their own rates. He had never heard any argument in favour of the Metropolitan Police Courts being paid for out of local taxation; on the contrary, he had always heard the present system spoken of as one which must, when the Local Government Bill was introduced, be swept away; and he thought that on this occasion they ought to encourage the Government to bring in a measure for the purpose by dividing against the present Vote, which he should oppose.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, that under an Act of Parliament now in existence it was necessary to provide funds for the Metropolitan Police Courts, to ensure that they were properly prepared for the purpose for which they were intended. With regard to the general charge of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Labouchere) that the Courts were a disgrace to the Metropolis, he could only say that it appeared too sweeping, although, if any particular instance were brought forward, showing that any individual building was inadequate and unsatisfactory in its accommodation, the complaint would, of course, receive consideration. He would remind the hon. Gentleman that there was a demand made last year for additional cells at Hammersmith, and it was for that reason that a sum of £2,200 was asked for in the present Estimates.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he had to call attention to the item of £2,200 for additional cells at the Hammersmith Police Court. The hon. Member for Fulham (Mr. Fisher) and himself had last year pointed out that the accommodation at that Court was very bad indeed, both with respect to prisoners and to the witnesses waiting to be heard. He now asked whether this sum included provision for buildings other than cells which were necessary for the proper accommodation of all who were required to be present at the Court?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) was mistaken in supposing that the Hammersmith Police Court was the only one about which complaints had been made. He believed he was right in stating that the majority of the Police Courts in the Metropolis were without anything like decent accommodation for those who were charged. The fact was, that those unfortunate persons were put into cells that were foul and filthy to a degree that would disgrace any city, and especially so the greatest City in the world. He agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in the remarks he had made, and should follow him into the Lobby if he divided the Committee on his Amendment.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he was not prepared to admit that the accommodation for untried prisoners at the Metropolitan Police Courts was so bad as the hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) supposed; but that it was not altogether satisfactory was shown by the fact that his right hon. Friend (Mr. Matthews) had last year re-appointed a Departmental Committee for the purpose of examining the state of the cells, which Committee had been originally constituted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). The Committee had been sitting since September last; its Chairman was Mr. Justice Wills, and there was upon it Mr.

Du Cane and the Chairman of Quarter Sessions in Derbyshire. Hon. Members would see that the Committee was eminently qualified to form an adequate judgment in this matter. They paid personal visits to all those places which required to be inspected; and he happened to know that on the day after Boxing Day the learned Judge personally inspected the places set apart for night charges. The Government were expecting the Report of the Committee daily; and the sum of money referred to by the hon. and gallant Member (General Goldsworthy) had been inserted in the Estimates in order to improve the general accommodation at the Hammersmith Police Court.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he hoped the Committee would look a little more closely into this Vote, because not only were they asked for the present sum, but by granting it they would be pledging themselves to future expenditure. He thought that some small grant-in-aid should be given in the case of the Bow Street Police Court, because it had some International duties to perform; but that the Courts of Hammersmith and Wandsworth should be paid for by towns like Birmingham and Manchester, who had their own Police Courts to provide and maintain, was indefensible. They were pledging themselves to build a new Court for Dalston, estimated to cost £8,000, by the Vote of £2,000 that was now asked for on account, and he said it was outrageous that the taxpayers should have to pay for the existing Courts, and much more so for a new Court in a fresh district of the Metropolis. He trusted that, unless they had some assurance from the Government that this would be the last time the Vote would appear, the Committee would give a strong Vote against it, for that was the only way in which they could express their views on the subject.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury as to whether it was not high time this Vote disappeared from the Estimates. The only way to effect that was to deal with the matter as they had dealt with the Vote for the London Parks on a former occasion, when it was decided that they should be maintained at the cost of the Metropolis. It was not possible that anyone could contend that the towns in the country, the smallest of which maintained its own Police Court, should, in addition, be taxed to maintain the Police Courts of the Metropolis. What on earth had Sheffield or Birmingham to do with the cost of building a new Police Court, say, for instance, at Dalston? It seemed to him to be out of all reason that this system should be continued, and he trusted that the First Lord of the Treasury and the President of the Local Government Board would make up their minds that it should now come to an end. He did not think they could object to the present Vote for the maintenance of existing Police Courts; but he should certainly go into the Lobby to support a Motion for the reduction of the Vote in regard to the purchase of a site and the cost of building a new Police Court for Dalston.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that as a Metropolitan Member he agreed that London ought to pay for its own Police Courts, and he hoped it would do so before long. But he thought it premature to say that this Vote should be cut down before the Local Government Bill was passed, as it undoubtedly would be, when they could hand over the cost of the Metropolitan Police Courts to the new London Authority. At the present time, however, he thought they must carry out the Act of Parliament, and pass the Vote on the understanding that when the new Act came into force, an alteration would be made, and the Police Courts dealt with in the same way as they had dealt with the expenditure on the London Parks.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield had expressed his present views with regard to this Vote; but it might have been well if, when he was a Member of a former Government which was responsible for a similar expenditure, he had used the same arguments. He (Mr. Ritchie) ventured to think that this question was one which ought to be raised when the Local Government Bill came forward for discussion. The Government were acting now by authority of the Act of Parliament, and so long as it was in force, they had no choice but to continue such provision as they considered necessary for the proper maintenance of the London Police Courts. There were, however, one or two considerations in connection with the subject to which he thought hon. Gentleman had not given sufficient attention. It was true that in the Provinces the maintenance of the Police Courts was regarded as a local affair, but London had always been considered as somewhat different from local towns, however considerable they might be. Large masses of the people migrated to London to a degree that was not found in any other town in the Kingdom. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Labouchere) had said that a large number of those persons contributed to the rates, but it was certain that a still larger number of them were a burden on the rates. Indeed, the increase of pauperism, especially in the winter months, was caused by people who migrated to the Metropolis and became a burden on the rates. There was also another point to which the hon. Member had not alluded. The fees in the Police Courts in London were paid into the Exchequer; whereas those of the Provincial Courts went into the local funds. That was a very important portion of the case, and although he did not say that the fees covered the whole expenditure, the fact remained. The Government, as he had stated, were just now proceeding under Act of Parliament, and it was incumbent upon them to come to the House for the expenditure which they considered to be necessary for the maintenance of the Metropolitan Police Courts.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) was right in saying that the Vote was submitted to the Committee under Act of Parliament; but it was for the Committee to say whether they would vote the money or not. The Act did not, in any way, engage that Committee to Vote the money asked for every year for the maintenance of these Police Courts. Again, it was no argument in favour of their continuing to pay for these Courts, to say that the fees were paid into the Exchequer. He could not go into the plea of migration; but he did not believe there was any such migration to Dalston as the right hon. Gentleman had spoken of, and the right hon. Gentleman would have to go far to prove that the Exchequer ought to give a grant in aid for the Dalston Police Court, because it would be engaged in cases unconnected with the district. The right hon. Gentleman said that the matter ought to be discussed when the Local Government Bill was in Committee. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken precisely the same view in his proposals; but he (Mr. Labouchere) would keep the matter in mind. In the meantime he proposed that they should agree to the Vote for the existing Police Courts, but that they should refuse the Vote for the £6,000 for the purchase of a site and for new buildings at Dalston.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,756, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he did not think the hon. Member (Mr. Labouchere) had considered what would be the result of the rejection of this Vote. There was no other authority in London which had power to raise money and which would be bound to provide Police Courts in the Metropolis, and the effect of the rejection of the Vote would be that the administration of criminal justice could no longer be carried on. He submitted that that would be the case. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had stated that a large burden was thrown upon the Metropolitan rates by the migration which took place from the provinces to London, and he (Mr. Kimber) believed there was one Union which, at the present time, supported permanently 700 or 800 paupers who had migrated to the Metropolis. That, he said, fully bore out the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that not only did the persons who come up from the Country to London not pay rates, but that in many cases they constituted a great burden upon them. It was a matter which ought not to be taken for granted that the cost of the police in the Metropolis ought to follow the same rule as in the country, and be borne entirely by the locality—the Metropolis. It ought at least to be discussed, whether or not the Metropolis was in a different position from that of other towns. It was admitted that the question was one of justice, and as the cost of the administration of Civil justice in the Metropolis was borne by the State at large, the same principle might be shown to be applicable, to some extent at least, to the administration of criminal justice.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, there was no danger of the failure of the administration of criminal justice at Dalston from the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), because the Vote made provision for a temporary Court there. He thought the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ritchie) was reduced to a very bare extremity when he appealed to him (Mr. Mundella) to know why, when he was President of the Committee of Council on Education, he had not pressed the abolition of this Vote on the Government of which he was a Member. The right hon. Gentleman, he thought, knew better than to think such an argument applied, and if he were to ask the right hon. Gentleman why, when he was Secretary to the Admiralty, he had not introduced a Local Government Bill, he should be answering him in the spirit of his own remarks. All that they asked was that they should not be committed to this new expenditure, and the right hon. Gentleman himself had practically admitted that the Vote was indefensible.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, that seven years ago a Committee, under the presidency of Lord Rosebery, recommended in their Report, dated the 30th of December, 1881, the erection of a Police Court at Dalston as a matter of urgent necessity, in order to relieve the pressure of business in other parts of the Metropolis. Since that time there had been growing complaints of the insufficiency of Police Court accommodation, and as hon. Members would be aware, the condition of things at Wandsworth and Hammersmith had become almost intolerable. The arrangement was made in order to utilize the magistrate at Dalston, and thus with only one additional magistrate to work Hammersmith and Wandsworth as whole-day Courts; but if the Dalston Court was not established with its complement of magistrates, they would not be able to carry out the arrangement. He pointed out that a contract for the site had already been entered into in pursuance of the law, and the Government were under an obligation to pay the amount of the purchase money—£4,000.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he understood from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) that the Government had signed a contract pledging the House to an expenditure of £4,000 for the purchase of a site for a new building at Dalston. Such a proceeding would not be allowed in any Town Council. It was not right that the House of Commons should be pressed to assent to an expenditure incurred without authority by the Government for the erection of a Police Court at Dalston. He thought the argument of the Home Secretary was therefore beside the question, and they still contended that the cost in the present instance should be borne by the inhabitants of the Metropolis. In his opinion this was the right time to protest against this expenditure. The condition of things at Dalston had gone on for some time, and no harm would be done if the matter stood over a little longer. The whole system was vicious, under which localities in the country were called on to pay for what ought to be borne by the inhabitants of London, and he considered it a disgrace that the Metropolis should not, by the proper management of its own affairs, copy the example of other towns in such matters as this.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he felt no hesitation in supporting this Motion. The burdens on the citizens of London were heavy; but he thought they were willing to make this payment in order to secure thereby the control of the Metropolitan Police Courts. When that was obtained he thought it would emphasize the anomaly which now deprived them of the control of the Metropolitan Police.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, if the contract had already been signed, and if it was binding on the Government for the purchase of the new site at Dalston?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, the contract was certainly morally, if not legally, binding on the Government. With regard to the question whether the contract had been signed, he would point out that that was a matter that was not in his Department.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he understood that the contract was completed, and if it was not carried out it would be necessary to give some compensation.

Mr. DODDS (Stockton) said, the question was whether any contract had been signed. He contended that a contract of this kind should be provisional, and only be binding on the assumption that the House of Commons voted the funds. The Secretary of State for the Home Department had said that the recommendation with regard to the Dalston Police Court had been made seven years ago, and that being so, he (Mr. Dodds) thought the matter might be allowed to remain over for another year. He was somewhat surprised to hear the President of the Local Government Board speak in the way he had of migration from the provinces to London. He (Mr. Dodds) had always understood that that migration, so far from burdening the people of the Metropolis with expenditure, really caused a large amount of money to be spent in London. [Mr. Ritchie: I spoke of paupers.] He protested that they had in the country to find enough money already, without being burdened with the cost of new Police Buildings in the suburbs of London. Although the Government had said they were proceeding by authority of Act of Parliament, that Act did not prevent hon. Members from expressing their opinion on this Vote, and he trusted that the majority would decide that, as in the case of the Parks, London should maintain its own Police Courts.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, he did not see why, by voting this sum now, they should involve themselves in an expenditure of £10,000 in the future. With regard to the contract, he did not see what business the Government had to enter into any contract for the purchase of a site; in the second place, he did not believe the contract was binding; and, thirdly, he thought if it was, it would be much better to sell the land.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that when two or three years ago, he had urged upon the Government to consider the condition of the Hammersmith and Wandsworth Police Courts, he was told by the then Secretary to the Treasury, that the Government avoided any responsibility in the matter, because the Police Courts would be taken over by the Local Government Authority, and on that distinct ground no steps were taken.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, he should support the Amendment by way of protest against the practice of making contracts to bind the House before the subject matters were considered. He believed the day would come when business men on the other side of the House would be very grateful to hon. Members on these Benches for having raised this question.

General GOLDSWORTHY said, that the Government had, in his opinion, done right in securing a site for the Police Court at Dalston.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that when a County Member he had voted against this principle, and he saw no reason why, having since become a Metropolitan Member, he should alter his views. The inhabitants of London were desirous of having the control of their own affairs, and the maintenance of their Police Courts was a matter which he thought they ought to pay for. He should vote for the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere).

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 48; Noes 87: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 57.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. DODDS said, he felt it was only reasonable at such an hour, seeing the extraordinary length of time the Chairman had been in the Chair—indeed, during the years he had been in the House he hardly remembered a longer Sitting in Supply—it was reasonable to suppose the time had come to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he could hardly imagine the hon. Gentleman was serious in making a proposal of the kind. True, the House met at 3 o'clock; but the Chairman of Committees had not been in the Chair for eight hours, and, even if that were so, it would not be reasonable for the Committee to cease work until 12 o'clock, the hour the House had agreed upon for closing discussion. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not proceed with a Motion that could not be entertained.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he would appeal to his hon. Friend not to persist with his Motion. True, the Chairman had been in the Chair nearly eight hours, but that was no reason why the Committee should not continue to sit till 12 o'clock.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(11.) £9,250, to complete the sum to defray half cost for Sheriff Court Houses in Scotland.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he did not thoroughly understand this Vote; but the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) being in his place, would no doubt give a lucid explanation of it. He (Mr. Labouchere) gathered that the House was bound to contribute a certain amount towards the maintenance of certain Courts in Scotland called Sheriffs' Courts. So far, so good; he did not complain of fulfilling that obligation by voting a certain sum; but what he would like to know, in the first place, was why the Vote, which last year was £7,570 for that purpose, should this year be £8,150? Why, too, when the obligation was to contribute to the maintenance, was the Committee asked to vote a sum for new works? Why should the whole sum be increased on that of last year by £4,000? This the Committee would see required some explanation.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, in addition he should like to ask some explanation of particulars under Sub-Head B. There was no detailed information in the Estimates as to the expenditure on each Court House. The whole sum distributed among 52 Court Houses would give to each an average of £275, and this seemed to him a high figure for the maintenance of old buildings together with the grant for new buildings.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he should like to know why no provision was made for a Court House at Kirkcaldy, that being by far the most popular and important town between the Forth and the Tay, and yet the only Court House was at Cupar. The strongest representations had been made in favour of a Court being held at Kirkcaldy, where lately police cells and every accommodation had been provided.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, that the increase in the Vote was due to alterations and improvements and drainage at Hamilton and elsewhere, long required, and now proceeded with. The sum of £4,700 would complete the payments for the year.

Vote *agreed to.*

(12.) £183,000, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to ask, first, for information as to the progress of the work of the Survey in Ireland; secondly, whether there was any system of taking stock established whereby the officer in charge could know what amount of stock he had on hand and how much was required—he referred to theodolytes and other instruments of great value—and also he would ask under what system the Department obtained stores, whether by private tender or open competition?

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, N.) said, he should like to know what provision was intended to be made for the work of revision of survey. As a matter of fact, he believed the work of the Ordnance Survey began in England with the counties around London, and the revision of the old maps had been going on for some time. In Scotland, the Ordnance Survey came later; but still there were counties—Fife and Mid Lothian, for instance—that were surveyed as far back as the years between 1840-50. The maps then produced were now quite out of date; but they might easily be kept up to date without any large expense by an efficient staff or a regular system. More than once this point had been raised in the House, and the answer given as regards Scotland was that the first survey being concluded some years ago, the head office had been shut up and the materials removed, so it would appear there was absolutely no provision made for the revision of the survey of Scotland at the present time. This might easily be provided by an automatic system brought into play without any great expenditure or increase of staff, and such was carried out in the United States, in Austria, and other European countries. Another point had been brought on previous occasions before the House, and also the other House, and it was a point in which considerable interest was taken in all parts of the United Kingdom, and particularly in Scotland. The matter was brought before the House of Lords three or four years ago by Lord Balfour of Burleigh. He referred to the incomplete state of the survey of the country as compared with other countries at the present time. The great object of the Ordnance Survey, apart from purposes of estate valuation, was to describe correctly the geographical contour of the country. The Survey maps, therefore, in the surface contour gave the different heights, but they did not complete the work by giving the depths of the depressions and the soundings of lakes and rivers. In the Survey maps of the United States the depths of lakes were recorded, and the same thing was found in Switzerland, and he believed in Italian and Austrian maps; and this had been urged on the Government with respect to the maps of Great Britain. There could be no doubt of its interest and value scientifically, and from other points of view. As a matter of fact, the body which took the most prominent part in urging this work was the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and the only two complete surveys of lakes in the United Kingdom were those of Loch Awe and Loch Lomond, taken 40 or 50 years ago by the Admiralty. When this point had been urged before the Treasury, the Department of Works replied it was work for the Admiralty, while the Admiralty said it came within the province of the Department of Works. He did not care which Department undertook the work; but to make our survey complete and worthy to stand on a level with the surveys of other countries, the contour and depths of the lakes should be laid down as well as the height of mountains. It was of interest and of value scientifically to know, from what had been done long ago in relation to Loch Lomond, that there was there a depth of over 100 fathoms a depth not equalled in any arm of the sea on the West Coast of Scotland, and only found in ocean soundings. Private investigation had shown even greater depths; for instance, Loch Morar, in the West of Inverness-shire, gave 180 fathoms, a depth not attained in any but ocean waters. The greatest interest would be found in the comparison of depths with other lakes, like those of Ireland, spreading over large surfaces, and it was a matter well worth the attention of the Government, whether it was not desirable to make provision for making our survey complete.

Sir EDWARD REED (Cardiff) said, he could support the observations of the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh, and extend them by saying that this survey of the lakes was of more immediate importance than the object of ascertaining the geographical contour of the country. He had himself in years past had occasion to make use of the Swiss Survey maps, in which all detailed information was given as to the depths of lakes, and had found this information most useful for engineering purposes. But when he came to our own Ordnance maps he found the whole of the lakes a blank, and civil engineers were deprived of that data so useful for them in the preparation of plans, and which they might fairly expect to find in a survey of the kind. This, and the question of adopting an automatic method of bringing maps up to date, were matters of great importance. He did not believe that the originators of the costly system of Ordnance Survey contemplated simply a record of the state of the country at one particular period; they surely must have had in their minds an idea of keeping up the information at regular intervals. He hoped that on these points the suggestions made would have serious attention, with good results.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, he would suggest the desirability of marking the heights above the sea on the Survey stones. The figures appeared on the maps; but it would be interesting and useful to have them really recorded on the spot. A traveller would not have to write for a map, and wait until he could receive it; he would have this interesting information before him on his journey. In many parts of Europe this information was recorded in localities, often at railway stations.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would include in his answers some information in reference to the salary of the Director of Survey. Last year that salary appeared as £870, but now it was suddenly raised to £1,200. It did not appear that this gentleman was entitled to such an increase, for he drew an extra sum of £400 for work done for the Local Government Boundary Commission, together with some £500 for retired pay.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, the expenditure had reached a very large amount, and he hoped that the account of the progress made would indicate the completion of the work soon.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, there was very little hope that we should be able to rival the United States Departments in this and other statistical matters. The United States were immeasurably ahead of us. It was a pleasure to see the amount of care bestowed upon obtaining such information by the Statistical Department at Washington. Still, though we might not be able to overtake the United States, he thought, considering the extent of the expenditure, our Ordnance maps might be more complete. Take the County of Fife; there was not an Ordnance map for professional purposes available; it was too small, and it was altogether out of date and useless for modern purposes by landowners and others. He knew of landowners who, when they had to deal with estates, were obliged to have a survey made for themselves.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, he would endeavour to reply so far as he could to the several questions asked. First, the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked as to the progress of the Irish Survey. This had now been ordered to be carried out with maps of 25-inch scale instead of the old 6-inch scale. This was pressed upon the Department in former discussions on the Estimates, and was now being done. In the next place, the hon. Member asked whether stock had been taken of the various materials in the possession of the Department, a question he had raised on a previous occasion. The hon. Member would see it was not possible to take stock of all materials at the same time; but a system had been adopted by means of which stock was taken of each particular class of materials, and in that way he believed they would be able to arrive in the course of the year at the amount of stock. Then the hon. Member asked as to the system of contracts for stores, and here he (Mr. Plunket) had to say that it was not possible to pursue the same system as was adopted in other Departments; materials and instruments being of the most delicate and complicated nature. It had been found practically impossible to adopt a system of open competition for these contracts. As to the salary of the Director, he explained that the apparent increase was due to the sum of £1,200 representing the consolidated salary hitherto partly paid under this Vote, and partly by military pay. This sum represented the whole of the salary. As to the observations by the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), he (Mr. Plunket) could only say they should have every attention, though he confessed he did not quite understand what the hon. and learned Member meant by an automatic system of revision. A re-survey was as often as practicable carried out without incurring a large expenditure.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he desired to know whether Scotland was to have the 25-inch maps, or was to continue with the old 6-inch maps?

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he did not mean to suggest any detailed plan when he spoke of automatic revision. What he complained of was that many Scotch counties were only completed on the 6-inch scale, and practically at the present moment there was no revision at all of the old maps, and many of the 1-inch maps were not yet published, or likely to be published this year. The appeal for a revised issue was refused before the Office was closed, and now it was said the Office being closed, and made over to the Post Office, nothing more could be done. The right hon. Gentleman had said nothing about the survey of lakes in Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom. He was informed that it could be carried out at a very small cost. He had had an opportunity of speaking on the subject with a naval officer who had been engaged on many Government surveying expeditions, and he said, referring to his experiences on the West Coast of Scotland and Ireland, that if directed to survey and lay down soundings on the lakes, this could be done by boats' crews in the middle of their ordinary sea work of surveying along the coast. The cost would be little, the result would be of the greatest value for scientific and engineering purposes, and also for navigation purposes. Even the lochs that constituted the Caledonian Canal had had no regular Ordnance survey; only a rough survey by private effort gave incompletely the general average of depth.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he would inquire into the matter, which, so far as he knew, was suggested now for the first time.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, the right hon. Gentleman had explained that the £1,200 for the Director represented the consolidated salary; but was there not also £400 for services on the Local Government Board Boundary Commission?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, the explanation which, until now he had not understood, was, that the asterisk was misplaced, owing to a slip of the printer; it should appear by the Major General's name, not that of the Director.

Mr. BRUNNER said, he hoped that his request would not be passed over as too trivial.

Mr. PLUNKET said, certainly he would bear it in mind, and have inquiry made.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, a note referred to the sum realized from the sale of maps, and it was a matter of importance to consider that these maps were sold at an excessively high price, on the principle of large profits and small sales. To many persons these maps would be useful, and he believed the Government would realize quite as much from sales if they considerably reduced the price to the public. Having made the original outlay, and got the proofs, any number might be produced. Everyone who had experience of printing knew that after the first cost the expense of printing machinery and ink did not amount to much. If the Government would be content with a profit of some 33 per cent, they would largely increase their sale, and benefit a large number of the community.

Vote *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £7,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the erection and maintenance (including rents, &c.) of Buildings for the Department of Science and Art."

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he must object to this Vote going through without discussion. He had something to say in regard to it, and hoped Progress would be now reported.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn,*) —put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

COPYRIGHT (MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS) BILL.—[Bill 156.]

(*Mr. Addison, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Lawson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Plaintiff to recover such damages (less than 40*s.*) as the court or judge may deem just).

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 9, leave out "passed," and insert "of the Session held;" and in line 11, leave out "law," and insert "laws."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Costs to be in the discretion of the judge).

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 25, after "tried," insert "and section four of 'The Copyright (Musical Compositions) Act, 1882,' is hereby repealed."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Proprietor not wilfully permitting such performance to be exempt).

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 26, leave out, "or places;" in line 27, leave out, "or places;" and in page 2, line 6, after "performance," insert "knowing it to be unauthorised."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Definition).

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Clause *struck out.*

Clause 5 *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Extent of Act).

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 13, leave out "extend only to England and Wales," and insert "not extend to Scotland or Ireland."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, why this limitation was introduced.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, personally he should prefer that the Bill should extend to Ireland and Scotland, for he believed it would in both countries prove a very useful measure. He did not wish to introduce controversial matter, and therefore had not included Ireland, but would be quite ready to meet the wishes of Irish Members. He might say that among his correspondence on the subject he had had complaints from persons who in Ireland had been victims of the system of blackmail the Bill would stop.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, he had no objection to the words "or Ireland" being struck out, his only object in proposing the Amendment was to carry out the intention of the promoters in the usual Parliamentary form. He expressed no opinion whatever as to the desirability of extending the Bill to Ireland or Scotland. As a matter of drafting, if that policy were adopted the clause should be struck out altogether.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the object of the Bill, as he understood it, was to prevent a system of fraud and blackmail pursued by a limited number of persons, and he could see no reason why the Bill should not apply to Ireland.

Mr. ADDISON said, he should be very glad to omit the clause.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, if there was any advantage in the Bill, Scotland had a fair claim to share in it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Addison, Clause *struck out* of the Bill.

Preamble *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee* — Civil Service Estimates; Class I. — Public Works and Buildings, Votes 14 to 20, 23, 25 to 27; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments, Votes 1 to 4

Resolutions [April 5] *reported.*

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Withdrawn*—South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways (Arbitration).*

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Moveable Abodes* [200].

Second Reading—Pharmacy Acts Amendment [House counted out].

Committee—Report—Customs (Isle of Man)* [195].

MOTION.

MOVEABLE ABODES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to provide for the registration and regulation of travelling vans or other vehicles used as Temporary Abodes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Hozier.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 200.]

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SEWERAGE WORKS—INCIDENCE OF COST.

Mr. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the case that the extra expense caused to a Sanitary Authority in carrying out a scheme of sewerage for a district, by reason of the drainage of county buildings, such as lunatic asylums situated within the district, falls wholly upon the local rates of such district; and, whether such buildings are assessed to the local rates of the district only on the agricultural value of the land without the buildings; and whether, if so, he could see his way to insert provisions either in the Local Government Bill or in the Lunacy Bill to remedy such a state of things, and to make such extra expense a charge upon the General County Rate?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The cost of general works of sewerage in the district of a Sanitary Authority, including those which are required for a lunatic asylum situated within the district, is defrayed out of the local rates. The lands and buildings acquired for the purpose of a pauper lunatic asylum are not liable to be assessed to local rates at a higher value than that at which they were assessed at the time of their acquisition. A clause altering the law in this respect would not be germane to the provisions of the Local Government Bill; but an opportunity will arise for my hon. Friend to raise the question of the assessment of asylums when the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill is before the House. The Government are willing to consider the matter in connection with that Bill.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON HORSES.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can see his way to permit medical men to keep at least one horse each free of Horse Tax?

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the right hon Gentleman, Whether such horses as were used by medical men, more especially by country doctors, for professional purposes, might not be described rather as trade than as pleasure horses; and whether it was not the fact that such men, although they used, did not abuse the roads, inasmuch as they drove very light traps?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I find that there is a precedent for such an exemption as the hon. Member's Question suggests. Up to 1869-70, when the Horse Tax stood at one guinea, doctors and ministers of religion paid only half the duty, and this continued till the duty was reduced to 10*s.* 6*d.* for everybody. The question whether one horse ought to be exempted in the case of doctors and ministers of religion is receiving the most careful consideration of the Government; but it must not be forgotten that exemptions are almost always of an insidious nature, and that it is difficult, when once you begin making exemptions from any duty, to know where to draw the line. There is some force in the observation of the hon. Member opposite (Dr. Farquharson) that doctors in the country districts do, to a certain extent, come under the definition of "traders." I must take this opportunity of reminding the House that the question of exemptions from Horse or Wheel Tax, and, indeed, the question of these taxes generally, is one between the interests of persons using horses and carts and that of the general body of ratepayers. It is not a question between the former and the National Exchequer. I mention this, because I see that in many quarters the idea still prevails that these taxes are in some way connected with the reduction of 1*d.* in the Income Tax. At the same time, the Government feel that it is essential that these taxes, purely local as they are, should be placed upon the justest possible basis.

MR. CHANNING asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had also considered the case of farmers' horses?

MR. GOSCHEN said, he was giving that matter his most careful consideration. What he was anxious to do was to carry out the view that what the French called "horses of luxury" were to be taxed; but that horses required for any particular trade should not be taxed. That was the theory of the tax, and he hoped it might be carried out in that sense and in that spirit.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON CARTS AND WHEELS.

MR. GENT-DAVIS (Lambeth, Kennington) (for Mr. KELLY) (Camberwell, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the very serious remonstrances which have appeared in the public Press, and which have been addressed to him, against the proposed new taxes on carts and wheels, he has any intention of abandoning them, or, at any rate, so modifying them as to prevent their proving an oppressive tax upon industry, and being the means of throwing a very large number of artisans, more especially in the van-building and wheelwright trades, out of work.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman adhered to his Estimate of £300,000 as the produce of the Wheel and Cart Tax; and, whether he was aware that, outside official circles, it was almost universally considered that the Estimate was much too low?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he was quite prepared in the case of this tax, as in others, to listen to all the remonstrances that might be made; but a great many of those remonstrances which he had seen had been somewhat exaggerated—such, for instance, as the suggestion that artisans in the van-building and wheelwright trades would be thrown out of work. The hon. Member dealt with two questions, which were really distinct—the small Wheel Tax which was proposed, and the heavier tax which was put upon vans. While, no doubt, he had received remonstrances from the owners of heavy vans on the one hand, he had, on the other hand, received strong expressions of approval on the ground that these heavy conveyances, which caused immense expense in repairing the roads, should contribute to their repair. As attention had been drawn to the remonstrances in the Press, he wished to point out that when any particular interest was hit it was certain that they would write to the newspapers, while the vast number of those who would benefit by the remission of rates were silent; and in that way sometimes a false public opinion was created. With reference to the point most properly brought to his attention by the hon. Member (Mr. Pickersgill), he was making inquiries into the subject; and it was very possible that a considerably larger revenue might be derived. It was perfectly right that officials should generally be moderate in their Estimates. While he should be glad to meet any specific grievance, evidence had come to him that this tax—namely, that on heavy vans—was considered to be a fair tax; and at present he saw no reason to modify the resolution at which the Government had arrived to propose this tax.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCES FOR AGRICULTURAL CARTS AND WAGGONS.

Mr. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any licences will be required, either per wheel or otherwise, for waggons and carts used solely in agriculture?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; no licences of any sort will be required for any vehicles used solely for the purposes of agriculture.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) inquired, whether the employment of carts and waggons by farmers in carrying their farm produce to market for sale or to a railway station would be considered an employment in agriculture?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; I should so understand it. If a farmer conveyed his own produce to market, or to a railway station, that would be employment on the work of the farm. On the other hand, if he let out his carts, and did haulage for other people, that would clearly not come under the exemption, and he would be liable.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) asked, whether farmers' carts which were used for carrying coal from railway stations would be liable to be taxed?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member is perfectly right in putting this Question. Where a farmer uses his cart for the conveyance of coal from railway stations for other persons, then I consider that he ought to pay the tax; but if he uses it, say, to take his wheat to a railway station, and to bring back coal for his own use, then I do not consider that he ought to pay the tax. That is the general spirit in which the Act will be administered. It is very difficult to say beforehand how particular cases will be dealt with; but, doubtless, some latitude will be allowed in the administration of the statute.

SCOTLAND—LOCAL TAXATION—ALLOCATION OF £240,000.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, When the scheme for the distribution of the sum of £240,000, to be allocated to Scotland in aid of local taxation during the present year, will be laid before Parliament; and, whether, inasmuch as the grant for main roads, which is to be a first charge on that sum, is almost exclusively a grant in favour of the county ratepayer, he will take care that the interests of the ratepayers of the towns are duly regarded in the general scheme?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, with regard to the first part of the Question, he would give the hon. Member the earliest Notice possible as to when the proposal would be laid before Parliament. As to the second point, he was in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland; and it would be the earnest desire of both of them to do justice as between the ratepayers in the country and the ratepayers in the towns.

MR. BUCHANAN wished to know, whether they would have the information as to how the sum was to be allocated in Scotland before the Local Government Bill for England passed through the House?

MR. R. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked, whether there was any reason why the financial arrangement affecting Scotland should not be laid before the House now?

MR. GOSCHEN said, there was no Vote to be taken before the information with regard to allocation to Scotland and Ireland was laid before the House. What he had said, or what he intended to say, was that a Vote would have to be taken before the sum could be allocated; but not before the Government could announce their intentions to the House. He would communicate again with the Secretary for Scotland, and he was in communication with the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and he would endeavour to give the earliest information with regard to the proposals which he should make. He could only repeat that the Government were under somewhat high pressure with regard to the preparation of the various schemes; and he was anxious that there should be every deliberation as to the best mode of distributing, both in Ireland and Scotland, those sums that would be allocated to local purposes. No further delay would take place than was absolutely necessary.

CRIMINAL LAW—7 & 8 GEO. IV. CAP. 28—REPEAL OF THE "WHIPPING PROVISIONS."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Government will introduce their promised Bill to repeal the "whipping" provisions of the 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV. c. 28; and, whether it has been decided to include the repeal of the "whipping" provisions of the Vagrant Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he hoped to be able this Session to repeal the provision referred to by the hon. Gentleman, either by the Statute Law Revision Bill or by a separate measure. He would consider the suggestion as to repealing the "Whipping Clauses" of the Vagrant Act.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)—AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) (for Mr. KELLY) (Camberwell, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, when giving Notice of his intention to move an Address to Her Majesty for the appointment of an additional Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, he has had in mind the provisions of Clause 6 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, now in this House, and which has already passed through the House of Lords, the language of which clause is as follows:—

> "On an Address from both Houses of Parliament representing that, regard being had to the duties imposed by this Act on the *ex officio* Commissioner, the state of business in the High Court in England requires the appointment of an additional Judge of that Court," &c.;

and, whether the proposed appointment of a further Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice would be in addition to or substitution for the appointment provided for under such Clause 6 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The appointment of an additional Chancery Judge is rendered necessary by the state of business in that Division of the High Court of Justice. The powers given by

Clause 6 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill will enable the Government to appoint a Judge; but no such proposal will be made to the House unless the then state of business in the High Court renders it absolutely necessary that such an addition shall be made.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

GOVERNMENT YARDS AND FACTORIES.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham), in rising to move as an Amendment—

> "That in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government Yards and Factories, so far as may be done without injury to the Public Service,"

said, that it was unnecessary to offer any apology to the House for asking it to postpone the consideration of the Estimates for a short time in order to turn its attention, if only for an hour or so, to a subject which was quite as interesting and quite as important, both from an economic point of view, as the saving or the squandering of the nation's taxes. The condition of the labour market and of the sources of employment raised questions which not only puzzled philosophers and statisticians, but constituted for the practical politician the one question of supreme importance at the present time. The one subject which seemed to escape the sweep of our statesmen's telescope was the small Island in which we lived and had our being. He might be paradoxical and parochial in his ideas, but he could not help thinking that the number and the prospects of our unemployed artizans at home formed a subject quite as worthy of consideration as the condition of Egypt, the Canadian Fishery Question, the Indian liquor question, or the remuneration of that interesting person, the Royal rat-catcher. What was the present condition of the labour market? It was generally computed that there were at the present time some 7,000,000 of adult male workers in the Three Kingdoms. According to the speech delivered by the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. Abrahams) last December, at the annual Congress of the Trades Union at Swansea, there were at the present time 900,000 workmen out of employment, and according to the same authority, the 6,000,000 workmen were working on an average 9 hours a-day. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that if that average of 9 hours a-day were reduced to 8 hours, the immediate effect would be to absorb 750,000 out of the 900,000 unemployed. He imagined, however, although, of course, he spoke under correction, that out of the 7,000,000 workmen there were 5,500,000 in employment and 1,500,000 out of employment, and he put the average daily normal working hours at 10 instead of 9, or 60 hours a-week. The average overtime worked by each man was 12 hours a week, which was a little less than the average overtime at the Woolwich and Enfield Factories in 1885. As the normal hours of labour were 60 per week, and the average amount of overtime 12 hours per man, seeing that 12 was the fifth of 60, it followed that if the average of 12 hours overtime were distributed it would absorb 1,100,000 out of the 1,500,000 of unemployed artizans. Now, the Government of this country was a very large, if not the largest, employer of labour. It employed, or did until recently, at Woolwich and Enfield alone, more than 10,000 men, and at the five great Dockyards it employed 21,000. It was, therefore, necessary to look with special solicitude to see what attitude the Government took up on the subject of overtime. He should also be glad to learn from some Member of the Government what view they took of the respective merits of overtime and night shifts. He thought it was necessary that there should be an authoritative declaration on the subject in order that the country might know the mind of the Government, especially as there was reason to believe that a sensible and wholesome alteration had been made recently. What the public were able to learn from Parliament Returns was that in the year 1885-6—he apologized for the age of the figures he was compelled to give, but it would have taken too long to bring the figures up to a more recent date—in the year 1885-6, out of a total of 10,254 men employed at the Government establishments at Woolwich and Enfield, 7,760 worked, on an average, 12½ hours per week overtime for 37 weeks out of the 52. The total number of hours overtime worked at Enfield and Woolwich in that year was 4,832,950, which, if distributed among fresh men, would have given employ to 1,549 hands for 52 weeks at 60 hours a-week. Thus every five men working overtime kept out a sixth. It was, however, said that the sixth man was not there to accept employment, and, therefore, that the Government must work overtime because the necessary labour was not available. He knew it was a prevalent belief that all those called the unemployed were unskilled labourers, and some persons went so far as to say that the unemployed were for the most part thieves and roughs. Heaven knew what the unskilled artizans might come to if they were left no alternative but crime and the workhouse. Unfortunately it had been shown that up to the present time a large percentage of the most skilled workmen had for some time past been living on the unemployed benefit fund of the Trades Unions. He wished to prove that the sixth man was there, and to prove, also, from statistical tables and from the Trades Unions returns, published in the form of a Blue-Book, that highly skilled artizans of the very same description as those who had been working overtime in the Government Dockyards and factories were walking about the streets and factories waiting for employment and living on the unemployed benefit funds of the Trades Unions. What was the description of men who had been working overtime at Woolwich and Enfield? They were engine fitters, engineers, smiths, boiler makers, iron ship-builders, moulders, carpenters, joiners, wheelwrights, masons, brickmakers and others. If hon. Members would turn to the tables of the Trades Union Societies they would find that in the year 1886 there were in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers 7·4 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, and necessitating an expenditure on the part of that Society of £1 12*s.* 5½*d.* per member; of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Engineers 7·8 per cent of its members were receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, necessitating an expenditure of £1 12*s.* 7*d.* per member; the Steam-Engine Makers' Society had 5·8 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, necessitating an expenditure of £1 2*s.* 11*d.* per member; the Friendly Society of Iron Founders had no less than 13·9 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the united benefit fund, involving an expenditure of £2 14*s.* 7*d.* per member; the United Society of Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders had 22·2 of its members receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, entailing an expenditure of £1 7*s.* 11*d.* per member; the United Kingdom Pattern Makers Association had 9·6 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the united benefit fund; and the Associated Blacksmiths' Society had 14·4 per cent receiving in a similar way. He maintained that these tables were a splendid record of the fight which the Trades Unions of the country had been making with distress and the want of employment; but the Trades Unions could not go on indefinitely standing this strain upon their resources. There was another feature in regard to overtime work, which he desired to bring under the notice of the House—namely, its costliness and its extravagance. By paying wages of time and a half or time and a quarter to a tired man, they were paying an appreciated price for a depreciated article. He put the produce value of overtime work at a quarter below that of ordinary time; but they paid a quarter more for it. In this way for 4,800,000 hours of overtime work, which was in round numbers the amount of overtime work done in Woolwich and Enfield in 1885, the men claimed and were paid wages for 6,000,000 hours at time and a quarter, or 7,200,000 hours at time and a half. But the produce value was worth a quarter less than ordinary time; so that for 3,600,000 hours' work they paid 6,000,000 hours' wages. This feature of overtime work was perfectly familiar to all large employers of labour, and he was not surprised to find that the Government officials one and all united in condemning the wastefulness and extravagance of overtime. This was shown by the evidence given before Lord Morley's Committee on the Manufacturing Departments of the Army, which reported last year. Among the witnesses examined was Colonel Barlow, the Superintendent of the Royal Laboratory at Woolwich, who said, in answer to question 3,302—

> "I think it advisable to spread your work over as large a number of men as you can. In the case of overtime you give the men a good deal of extra pay for the time being, and then it stops; and, so far as the men themselves are concerned, that is a positive disadvantage. I think as a Government work we are right to employ a greater number of men instead of employing a smaller number and giving them a tremendous amount of work. For instance, I found them working up to 10 o'clock at night, and as soon as I could, I introduced night shifts and extended the work over a greater number."

General Maitland, the Superintendent of the Gun Factory objected to overtime on the ground that it was extravagant and wasteful; as also did Mr. Hurst, Accountant and Auditor to the Manufacturing Departments, on the score of expense. The Committee on the Administration of the Dockyards reported in the previous year. Before that Committee, in 1886, Admiral Herbert, Admiral Superintendent at Portsmouth Dockyard, in answer to question 1,615, condemned "extra time" as very expensive, and said—

> "That it was impossible for men to work those long hours and give us any return proportionate for our money."

Mr. John Huddy and Mr. Robert Barnaby joined in the same view. That was a formidable list of witnesses, and he would like to know, and the public were interested in knowing, whether the public had really parted for ever with a system of work which was so unjust to those who had no work at all, which was so costly to the ratepayers, and which was so injurious to the moral and physical welfare of this generation. He would like to know whether it was the fact that overtime had been forbidden at Woolwich and Enfield. He should like to know further, whether that prohibition extended to all Government Departments of labour, and whether it was a temporary suspension or a permanent regulation. The House knew that six weeks overtime had already been worked at Enfield this year. He should like to know what was the nature of the work done by overtime, and if the work could not have been done by night shifts. He would further like to know if in the future the Government were going to substitute working by night shifts for a system of working by overtime. He asked these questions in no spirit of hostility to the Government. He simply asked for information which he thought would be interesting to those who were specially concerned with this branch of the labour question. The question of overtime in Government yards, shops, and factories, and its relation to the labour market, was merely the fringe of that very much larger question which, to an over-populated country, was the one question of supreme moment and surpassing interest—namely, the general distribution of wages and employment throughout the country. It seemed to him to be a question of whether one man was to work overtime and another man to work no time, of whether two men were to work for eight hours or one man for 16 hours. It seemed to him to be a question whether the labourer Dives would allow the labourer Lazarus to pick up the crumbs which fell from his table, or whether he would insist on sweeping them up for his own benefit. We know that any universal application of an Eight Hours' Bill would be impossible in a society like ours, and, if possible, it would be undesirable. It would be impossible, because, before contemplating the adoption of an Eight Hours' Bill, they must first of all get foreign workmen in other countries to reduce their hours of labour, or else they must shut them out of this country by the strictest protection. Any advocate of an Eight Hours' Bill who did not realize that was playing a game at blind man's buff. An Eight Hours' Bill would be impossible in the second place, because intellectual labour and the retail work of redistribution in shops differed essentially from manual labour, and could not be controlled by the same measures. He repeated, therefore, that it was impossible to put a whole society into the Procrustean bed of an Eight Hour Bill. But the working classes themselves had the same power over their hours of labour as they had over the wages they received. They could reduce their hours by the same lever by which they raised their wages; it was by the working classes themselves that the hours of labour must be shortened in this country. It was by combination, by the pressure of public opinion, by voluntary association, rather than by any Eight Hours' Bill that the excessive hours of labour in this country must be shortened. It had already been done in South London by a voluntary closing movement, under the auspices of his hon. Friend the Member for Dulwich (Mr. Maple). They were told that working men who got overtime liked that overtime, and, like all monopolists, refused to share it with their unemployed brethren. He very much doubted that, because, in the first place, working men were very just to one another, and because, in the second place, the unemployed were a terrible tax on the employed, a far greater tax upon the working classes than to any other class. Not only were they a burden on the rates of the parish and the funds of the Union, but upon the earnings of the working men from whom the unemployed were always begging or borrowing. The truth was, that a country with an overstocked labour market like ours must be prepared to do one of two things—either to secure by some means or another a more equal distribution of wages and employment, or be prepared to deal with a very large increase of the pauper and criminal classes. We must face this, because it faced us. Those who would not face facts were sure to be made to feel them. It was the same problem which 40 or 50 years ago stung the sardonic humour of Carlisle into prophecies—then described as the mutterings of dyspepsia—now being realized day by day. It was the same problem which moved the fierce indignation of Kingsley, and which lent to the pages of Disraeli's *Sybil* their most pathetic interest. The same problem was now again before us, but under conditions how changed. There was now a larger population, no Corn Laws to abolish, no landed aristocracy at whose doors they could lay the burden of their sufferings. The condition of the landed classes in this country was pitiable in the extreme, was almost such as might "draw iron tears down Pluto's cheek." That condition had been reached while we had been enjoying the unrestricted importation of every article under the sun, human beings included. For 40 years the gospel of every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost, had been preached and practised in this country with amazing success. It had produced cheap money and the sweating system; a million of unemployed, and money so cheap that the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down and reduced the interest on the National Debt. What a commentary on the gospel of gain from ruin! A period of unexampled cheapness of money, said the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) and a population of something like 5,000,000 of men, women, and children who could get no work or wages, or who were forced to work under conditions which had lately been revealed, and which made a very ugly stain indeed on the gorgeous garment of our modern civilization. Was it not time, then, to take stock of our industrial condition, and were they not entitled to look to the Government for guidance and direction on that labour question, for on no question more than that did the public of this country require more guidance and direction, because economic distress was always more dangerous and more difficult to deal with than political discontent. He expected to receive a sympathetic, and a satisfactory answer from the Government; and he was certain that the formal repudiation of the principle of overtime by the Government would have a sensible and salutary effect in diminishing excessive hours of labour throughout the country, and would thus be a first step towards that more equal distribution of profits, wages, and work which alone could save an over-populated country from industrial anarchy and social ruin. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government yards and factories, so far as may be done without injury to the Public Service,"—(*Mr. Baumann,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Peckham had brought forward a very interesting subject in moving his Resolution; but he was afraid that, speaking on behalf of the Government, he could not accept the assumptions contained in that Resolution. Those assumptions were two in number. His hon. Friend assumed, first, that there was a practice of working overtime in the Government Dockyards and manufactories; and, next, that if that practice were discontinued a greater number of persons would be employed in those establishments. He was afraid that his hon. Friend and he approached that subject from somewhat different points of view. His hon. Friend approached it from the point of view of the condition of the labour market and the dearth of employment which existed in many places. Everybody, of course, had great sympathy with the unemployed workmen, and must feel that it was exceedingly desirable that the trade of the country should be in such a state as to give full employment to all our working population. The Government, therefore, had great sympathy with his hon. Friend when he expressed the earnest desire that work might in some way or other be found for the unemployed. But they had to approach matters affecting the Government manufacturing establishments from a somewhat different point of view from that of his hon. Friend. They had to conduct the Government yards and factories in the manner which would secure the greatest efficiency and the greatest economy. Those were the rules by which alone they must be guided; and, looking at the question from that point of view, the Government absolutely condemned systematic overtime. They thought that systematic overtime was costly, both as regarded the money that was expended and as regarded the quality of the work that was produced. He might point out that they had not in the Departments either under the First Lord of the Admiralty or under the Secretary of State for War any systematic overtime at all. His hon. Friend had quoted certain Returns which went as far back as 1885-6, and complained that there was no material to his hand of later date; but if he had gone to the Library he would have found there a continuation of the Return that was moved for by the hon. Member for East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) last year, and which had since been presented, showing the amount of overtime at Enfield and Woolwich in 1886-7. From that Return it would be seen that, although in 1885-6, during a time of great pressure, there was a considerable amount of overtime at those manufacturing establishments, yet since that date the amount of overtime had been enormously reduced, and at present there was no systematic overtime at all. When his right hon. Friend the present First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was at the War Office he looked into that matter very carefully, and issued an order that the practice of overtime must be discontinued except in cases of urgency at the manufacturing establishments of the War Office; and since that period the practice had been discontinued, and at present systematic overtime did not exist there. As to the Dockyards, he could not, of course, speak with anything like the same authority; but he had obtained from his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) the information that the working of overtime in the Dockyards and Factories of that Department was entirely discontinued so far as could be done without injury to the Public Service, and was only resorted to in cases of great urgency or emergency, where it was necessary to advance some special parts of the work, and that it had been arranged to work night-shifts wherever practicable. So that as regarded the Dockyards systematic overtime was altogether discontinued. It was, of course, perfectly clear that occasional overtime must sometimes take place, as, for instance, for the repair of machinery or the preparation for night-shifts, or to advance some special part of the work for which special skilled labour was required. His hon. Friend had referred to overtime being worked at Enfield Factory at a very recent period. It was true that overtime was sanctioned for a few weeks at Enfield in order to advance special parts of the new rifle, which required special skill, and which they wished to advance as quickly as possible. It was their desire to put the new rifle into the hands of the troops for manual drill with the least possible delay, and that could only be attained by employing certain special men overtime for a short period. If he, as Secretary of State for War, had interfered and not allowed that limited amount of overtime the only effect would have been to delay the time at which the new rifle was put into the hands of the troops, and it would not have been possible to employ one single additional man at Enfield. Therefore, as regarded the Government establishments they had discontinued systematic overtime, and they did not resort to overtime except in cases of urgency. They could give his hon. Friend no further assurance than that. In a case of urgency they must claim the right to employ the men in the Dockyards and Government manufacturing establishments for overtime if the interests of the Public Service required it. But, as his hon. Friend said his main object was to obtain a declaration from the Government in regard to overtime, his hon. Friend would admit that he had now given as full and complete an assurance as to their policy and practice as could be fairly asked from them; and therefore he supposed that his hon. Friend would not think it necessary to put the House to the trouble of a Division on his Resolution.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £7,900, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) said, he rose for the purpose, not of finding fault with what was in the Estimate, but of finding fault with what was not in it. The condition of the building of the Normal School of Science, to which he would like to draw the attention of the Committee, was really almost disgraceful. The accommodation which they had at present in this school, the only Government school in the country for training science teachers, would be a disgrace to a third-rate German town. He happened only that day to visit the school, and had judged for himself what the accommodation was. To take one department only—namely, that of the experimental science of physics under the able direction of Professor Rücker. It appeared that so large a number of students at the present moment attended that particular department, that the buildings on the east side of Exhibition Road were entirely insufficient for their accommodation, and that a temporary building on the west side, which was put up for the International Exhibition, had been rented from the Commissioners of 1851, and was used as a physical laboratory. Not only was that building totally inadequate, but even that was to be taken away from the Science School. He was informed that the authorities of the Imperial Institute had given notice that they would require the land upon which the building was erected in a very short time for a road which they purposed making, or were in the act of making, between Queen's Gate and Exhibition Road. The consequence of this would be that the whole of the students who now worked in this building would be thrown, as it were, out of employment, and that our only Government Normal School of Science would actually have to reject the very large number of students who were now going there. He would put it to the First Commissioner of Works whether this was a desirable condition of things, and whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention should not be directed to the very important question of providing accommodation of a really efficient character for this great national institution? Even from an economic point of view this matter required, he thought, the attention of Her Majesty's Government, for should these students be turned away from the doors of the Normal School, the fees which they paid, amounting now to no less than £3,500 a-year, would no longer be paid into the Exchequer, and the Government would suffer a corresponding loss. He trusted, therefore, that this first point to which he begged to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would be carefully considered by him. But there was a still wider question to which he wished to refer, and that was the housing of the National Science Collections. The Committee were, perhaps, not aware that we possessed now in South Kensington one of the most complete collections of scientific instruments and apparatus in Europe, and that it was only housed in temporary buildings—in a portion of the building once occupied by the International Exhibition. For this housing the Government now paid £2,000 a-year. Some time ago, this matter having attracted the attention of the Government, a Departmental Committee was appointed considering, not so much whether this collection should continue or should be housed, but having the collection, and valuing it, how it should be housed. The Committee consisted of Sir Frederick Bramwell, Lord Lingen, Mr. Mitford, and Colonel Donnelly, and they went into the whole question most fully. Evidence was obtained from all the leading men of science in the country as to the necessity and importance of this collection, and the Report of the Committee was so nearly unanimous that three of these gentlemen—namely, Sir Frederick Bramwell, Lord Lingen, and Colonel Donnelly, reported most favourably of the necessity of having proper buildings erected for the housing of the collection. Mr. Mitford reported separately, not so much because he did not agree with the Report of his Colleagues, as because he failed to appreciate so much as they seemed to do the value of this scientific collection. About that matter, however, there could be no doubt at all. The question of the cost of the erection of suitable buildings was most carefully gone into, and it was shown that, inasmuch as a very large rent had to be paid towards the housing of the present collection, and considering the sale of other land and buildings belonging to Government which would no longer be needed, a sum of something like £32,000 would be sufficient to pay for what was required. Under these circumstances, he thought there ought to be no difficulty in inducing the Government to look into the matter, and to take steps to put the National Science Collection on a footing worthy of the nation. A great deal had been talked about our failing industries, and we had heard much about protecting those industries; but he would venture to say that the one mode which all were agreed would lead to the protection of our industries was the development of the scientific education of the people. As he had said before, the present condition of things was a disgrace to the nation. When they heard of a small country like Switzerland spending £70,000 or £80,000 in erecting a single building, he thought it was high time that we should turn round and put our house in order, so far as concerned the proper accommodation in the National Science Schools and the housing of this scientific collection. He trusted that the Board of Works and Her Majesty's Government would give their best attention to this matter, which was one of real national importance.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he should like to say a word or two on this subject. He must candidly say that he agreed with the hon. Member opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) that something ought to be done to complete the Museum at South Kensington. When they looked into the Estimate they found that on new works, alterations, and additions to the South Kensington Museum only £100 was to be spent, and those of them who believed in the importance of the National Science and Art Collection at South Kensington must say that they ought to look forward to the building in which the collection was exhibited being completed at once. Another part of the Estimate showed that they were paying at the present time no less than £4,500 for the rent of premises on the opposite side of the road to the Museum. Under the new state of affairs as to the future rate of Consols, that represented a sum of something like £200,000. Well, he (Mr. Bartley) thought the time had come when they should make the South Kensington Museum complete, and should finish the buildings which had been designed for so many years, and do away with the present old and perfectly unsuitable premises on the other side of the road which they were now renting. It was true he had taken an active part in the objection raised to the system of circulating objects of art throughout the country, and he thought the reason why money was not given freely to complete these Museum buildings was because many persons thought that South Kensington spent too much money in keeping Art treasures, duplicates, and reproductions to itself, and did not circulate them as much as they should amongst other parts of the country. But, be that as it might, he agreed that it was a disgrace to the country that they should not by this time have completed these Museum buildings. It was true that a good deal of money had been spent on them; but it was also true, as the hon. Member opposite had pointed out, that smaller countries than our own spent greater sums than we did on such purposes. He thought the time had arrived when they should complete the buildings in South Kensington and put its working upon a broader basis. If this were decided upon he thought the House would be very willing to spend the necessary amount. He must say he did not look with any great hope to the two Front Benches doing this. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), if he got up to speak on this subject, would advocate increased expenditure for this purpose; but, as it was pointed out last night, when the right hon. Gentleman was on the Ministerial side of the House, he did not take any steps to bring about such a consummation. The only way in which a satisfactory result in regard to this matter could be arrived at, and the Museum buildings completed, was for both sides of the House to combine in forcing the Front Bench into action. If this magnificent Museum were complete he believed it would do more than any other measure which could be adopted to promote trade and industry. Nothing would do more good than to put this Exhibition in a better position, and extend its operations by loans of specimens through the small as well as the large provincial towns of the country.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he hoped the Committee would allow him to add a few words to what had fallen from hon. Gentlemen who had taken part in the debate so far. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) occupied, as they knew, a position of authority in connection with Owen's College, Manchester, and he (Mr. F. S. Powell) had the honour of being a member of the Governing Body of the Yorkshire College at Leeds; and he must say that when they took into account the work that was being done by those two provincial institutions, the position of South Kensington in regard to the country generally was discreditable to the Government. He thought the time had come when those who had seats in the House, as the Representatives of the industrial classes in the country, ought to entreat the Government, not indeed to be lavish, but to be just and generous in their dealings with this institution. They had had occasion in the course of last year to regret the contraction of the grant to the British Museum; and while they viewed that contraction with great regret, he was sure they did not regard with any more satisfaction the unfair and unjust economy with regard to the scientific department, so to say, of our popular institutions in London. They had pressed on the Government by deputations and by various means the necessity of giving wider and larger and more perfect technical instruction throughout the country; but when they dealt with that which was the centre, that which was the chief, that which was the origin, and at the same time the controlling power in London, they found a want of largeness of view, and had to lament a most deplorable and false economy on the part of the Executive. He (Mr. F. S. Powell) had had an opportunity of visiting the collection at South Kensington in the course of the last few weeks, and he believed that no one could visit that Museum without feeling great regret that such a building should be allowed to remain in an incomplete state. Some portions of the building, as they knew, had been carried out in accordance with the designs of those who laid out the general scheme; but other parts were entirely unbuilt, and the remainder was in a miserably decaying condition, which was a sarcasm and a satire upon the whole conception. It was the wish of some Members of the House of Commons at all times to press economy upon the Government. It fell to his lot some times to join in this cry; but he did hope that if they were economical when economy was called for, they would also be liberal when necessity demanded liberality. It seemed to him to be really a mockery that they should be on all occasions entreating the Government to aid Municipalities in the different districts in the giving of technical instruction; and that then, when they came to London itself and to the Central Government, they should find matters worked down to what was really a miserable starvation point. There was one point of detail to which he should like to call the attention of the Government, and to ask them to answer a question upon, and that was the item of insurance. He saw that the sum for insurance had been reduced from the sum of £400 to £100. He held there was no more false economy than restricting the amount of insurance, and he trusted they would have an assurance from the Government, in the course of this discussion, that the reduction of the amount from £400 to £100 had not arisen from any reduction in the total amount for which the Museum was insured. He held that no more false economy could be committed than to risk the loss without compensation of such valuable objects as those which were continued in the Museum for the mere sake of saving the sum of £300. He (Mr. F. S. Powell) was sorry for having trespassed so long on the time of the Committee; but he had felt bound to take part in the discussion, having, as he had, the subject so closely at heart.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): I wish to say, in the first place, that so far as I am personally concerned, and I am sure I may speak for every Member of Her Majesty's Government, that we most entirely sympathize with the great interest which the hon. Member opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) has expressed—and certainly no one has a greater right to speak on this subject than he has—in the welfare and prosperity and highest development of the Science and Art Department of South Kensington; and whatever part may be taken—whatever, comparatively speaking, humble part may be taken by the Office I have the honour to represent in this controversy, so I can assure the hon. Member and the Committee that it is in a spirit of most hearty goodwill to all the interests for which the hon. Member has so well pleaded this evening. But then the Committee must understand that this question is one of very considerable difficulty. It has been felt to be a question of difficulty not only by the present Government, but also by the late Government, and the various proposals that have been made from time to time have not been given effect to, because all the interests concerned in this question have unfortunately not been able so far to come to a common understanding on the subject. Now, of course, it is quite true that it is better that a little time should be occupied in arriving at a thoroughly satisfactory plan than that, by a hasty decision, a wrong direction should be given to the ultimate development of this important institution; but, on the other hand, I must admit that there has been very great delay indeed on the part of successive Governments in dealing with this question —a delay which I myself deplore, and which I should be very glad to see terminated. But now let me explain to the Committee that it is not quite as plain sailing to settle this question as one might suppose if he had only heard one side of the matter. The authorities representing the Science and Art Department at South Kensington have very wide views as to how this subject should be dealt with. They naturally wished that in whatever buildings are undertaken the largest provision should be made, not only for the present needs, but also for the possible development of this great institution. On the other hand, the Treasury has to consider what they might fairly propose in the way of expense in the interests of this particular Department. I am afraid that it is a kind of triangular duel which has been going on for some time. The Office of Works being appealed to by the Treasury are, of course, bound to advise them from the practical point of view of the builder as to what they really think can fairly be asked in the way of increased buildings, and as to what they thought unnecessary and visionary demands. I ought to say at once that I admit that there is a considerable and a pressing want of immediate relief—and when I say immediate relief, I mean as soon as it can possibly be afforded — for the congestion that at present exists at South Kensington as regards the operations of the Science and Art Department. I do not think it would be of any use now for me to go over the early history of this controversy. I have no intention of doing so. I wish rather to submit to the Committee the proposals which have been made by me since I have been at the Office of Works. What we proposed to the Government was that there was a very large question which would have sooner or later to be decided, and the sooner it was decided the better; but that that matter was rather a question for the future, and one which, comparatively speaking, could afford to wait for its decision—namely, in what shape and form the Science and Art Department should find housing in South Kensington when the whole of the ground which is naturally the best for its accommodation—I mean that part which lies to the east of Exhibition Road—should come to be occupied by buildings. There have been various plans proposed. There were plans proposed by General Scott, and there have since been plans proposed by the Surveyor and Architect under the Office of Works. These plans, I believe, have each considerable merit; but I am not at all sure that when we put our hand to the plough and really undertake to make this building, it would not be, perhaps, advisable—I only throw it out as my own opinion—to invite the very best architectural skill to deal with this very important matter—important not only in the interests of the Department of Science and Art, but also important because it will permanently affect a very prominent site in a very beautiful part of London; and I think everybody will feel that, when that ground is covered, it should be covered by a building which should not only meet the wants of the Science and Art Department, but will be in itself an admirable architectural feature. That is all I want to say about the ultimate solution of this question; but it is agreed on all hands that any such plan, if it were undertaken, would require at least four years, and possibly a longer time to give effect to it. Well, but the want is pressing, and we have made suggestions which, I am afraid, have not been favourably considered by the Science and Art Department. I will tell the Committee what those suggestions were. There are at present abutting on the eastern side of the Exhibition Road four large and handsome residences, which are occupied by officers connected with the Science and Art Department. Now, one of the suggestions was that two or three—at all events, two—of these residences should, at any rate for a time, be taken from those who inhabit them at present, accommodation being found for those officers elsewhere. There would be no difficulty whatever in finding accommodation for them in the immediate vicinity of the establishment at South Kensington, and in these days of rapid communication by telephone and otherwise we do not suppose that any inconvenience would accrue from, say, two of these officers being located in the immediate neighbourhood and having to go a short way before reaching the Exhibition. The space which would be in this way obtained could, we are satisfied, be easily adapted for meeting the immediate wants of the Science and Art Department. We made, also, a further proposal. There are at present in these buildings in South Kensington a number of naval specimens, and various objects exhibited there in connection with naval architecture; and we have proposed that that part of the collection at South Kensington should be removed, at all events for a time, say to Greenwich, where we believe that accommodation could be found for it, the space so saved being given to the Science and Art Department. I may say that these proposals are the best we can think of to meet the want which we fully admit to exist, and which we are most anxious to see properly dealt with. I am afraid, however, that when the Treasury submitted these proposals to the Science and Art Department they were not favourably received; and so, unfortunately, the triangular duel appears still to be going on. I can only add that I regret this very much, and that whenever the Science and Art Department can propose terms which will be satisfactory to the Treasury—and, of course, the Treasury being the Department which has to find the money for anything which is done, it must first be satisfied on the subject before anything can be undertaken—then I assure the Committee that the Office of Works will be perfectly ready and most glad and prompt in giving whatever assistance they can to settle this question, which, as I explained when I commenced these few observations, is an object which I feel, as strongly as any Member of the Committee, is one deserving to be dealt with as soon as it conveniently can.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): The concluding words of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down appear to me to sum up the whole question. The right hon. Gentleman said that when the Science and Art Department could make proposals which would be satisfactory to the Board of Works and the Treasury, then it was to be hoped the question would be solved.

Now, Sir, it does not rest with the Science and Art Department. They have done everything, I believe, that lies in the power of the Department to do to bring about an accommodation both with the Board of Works and the Treasury, and the whole matter has been investigated in the fullest, most careful, and most impartial manner, and by the most impartial investigators. The hon. Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe) did not use too strong language when he said that the condition of the Science and Art Department at South Kensington was a disgrace to the country. It really is a public scandal, and I am quite sure that if the public had any idea of the condition of things, they would not tolerate it for a day longer. Now let me just state to the House how the matter stands. In the first place, the office accommodation and the examination rooms are altogether inadequate for the services which have to be performed. There are servants there who are working in passages, corridors, and cellars—I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council knows all about it—and are crowded up in unhealthy rooms in conditions under which no public or private servant ought to be asked to work. It is in the last degree disgraceful that this state of things should be continued. There are something like £80,000 worth of Art objects which have been examined, or are to be examined, in the old building known as one of the old "Brompton Boilers," and when we remember the way in which the work is done it can hardly be imagined that it can be allowed to continue. The improvement of the state of the Science School is a matter of immediate and pressing necessity. That school has completely overflowed its limits, and a part of the physical laboratory has gone to the French annexe of the [Museum on the opposite side of the road. That annexe is required either next year or the present year—I believe during this year—for the Imperial Institute, and the Science and Art School will have to "clear out." There will be 60 students displaced, and there will be a loss of fees alone of over £3,000 a-year. But, more than that, the new students coming up from the country will have no accommodation, and this is, as has been pointed out, our training school for Science teachers. We talk about technical education in this House and on public platforms, we plead for it, and are all in favour of it—that is to say, we are in favour of talking about it—but no one seems to be in favour of spending money on it, and the result is that we are about to diminish our supply of Science teachers in consequence of lack of room in this Department. Then I go to the housing of the Science Collection. We have a Science Collection which is unexampled, which is unique, and which, taken with our Patent Museum, we can safely say contains examples which no Museum of the kind in the world contains. Our Patent Museum possesses Arkwright's great loom, Stephenson's first steam engine, and many other similar great inventions. In fact, from an historical as well as an industrial point of view, there is nothing to compare with the contents of this Museum anywhere else in the world. But these objects of interest cannot at present be seen or examined. Nothing could be more wretched than the position in which they are placed at the present moment. No one who has not seen the manner in which they are exhibited can believe how bad it is. They require, in order to be properly understood and appreciated, that proper accommodation should be given to them. It may be said, however, that these things will not suffer by delay; but that cannot be said in connection with the Science School. That is suffering by delay, and if when the right hon. Gentleman opposite passes the Technical Education Bill, as we sincerely hope he will, as technical education spreads in the Provinces, and as Local Authorities set up Technical Education Institutions, they will want teachers. Where are those teachers to come from? The Science School at South Kensington has provided the best teachers in the country, and that institution has done more for technical education than all the others put together, except Owen's College, in Manchester. Something ought to be said about finishing the Art Museum and Art Collection. What does the right hon. Gentleman opposite say? He says—"Well, we have our ideas about it—take over two or three private residences, pending accommodation for those who now occupy them elsewhere." I would put it to the First Lord of the

Treasury, as to the removal of the officers of the Exhibition from these residences, that you ought to have in connection with this Institution, as you have in connection with the British Museum, your officers resident on the spot. You have a collection at South Kensington the value of which amounts to millions of money. The Art specimens cannot be replaced if once lost. In case of a fire at the Museum the officers ought to be on the spot. To remove these men from the building is, I think, a great mistake; they certainly ought to be within a minute's call. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Plunket) said this is a problem which has engaged the attention of successive Governments, and that it is not so easily solved. Yes; but what is the reason that it has not been solved? It is because the Treasury, when driven into a corner, when it is short of money or wants to make a saving, says—"Oh, we will cut off Science and Art." In this country it is always a safe thing to cut down Science and Art. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) went down to Newcastle, and in his speech, which I read with great care, he said—"If you only left Science to local effort, Science would now walk alone and do without Government subsidy." As a matter of fact, he was speaking in a school which, but for Government subsidies, would have been shut up next day. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Oh, oh!] I know the school a great deal better than the noble Lord, and I tell him that nobody could be more astonished at his remarks that Dr. Rutherford.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Why, he gave me the information.

MR. MUNDELLA: But Dr. Rutherford would close his school within a month but for Government assistance. It would be impossible to continue the schools of this country unless there was a Central College for the training of teachers. But that does not arise on this particular Vote, and therefore I am afraid I have somewhat transgressed. What I specially want to do is to confirm all that has been said by my hon. Friend (Sir Henry Roscoe), and by hon. Gentlemen who spoke on the other side of the House—that there is no country in Europe that has made such wretchedly small sacrifices for the training of scientific men, for the purpose of giving scientific instruction, as our own. The subsidy given in any small German State is far greater than the subsidy we give. The difference is as distinct as daylight is to darkness. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington will make that out if he turns to the Report of the Commissioners on Technical Education. It is time we should put our house in order, and put our scientific teaching upon a proper footing, if we mean to do anything in the way of technical education.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: We spend over £500,000 sterling a-year.

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes; but what do we spend it in? We do not spend it upon scientific teaching. That amount includes the whole of the Science grants of the country; it includes the whole of the cost of the Art teaching of the country; it includes the whole cost of management at South Kensington and the cost of the whole of the Circulation Department in the bargain. It is something less than what is spent upon a single Science teaching institution in Berlin alone. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) said we should come to an agreement about the method to be pursued. He is anxious we should take wise steps, and not be too hasty lest we should not perform our work thoroughly and satisfactorily. He pointed to the fact that a Departmental Committee was appointed to inquire into the housing of the Science and Art Collections. Lord Lingen, of the Treasury, Major General Donnelly, Sir Frederick Bramwell, and Mr. William Mitford, formed the Committee, and they all agreed, except the latter, to a Report, and that Report was signed on the 27th of July, 1885. Mr. Mitford doubted whether the public would spend the money recommended. If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) would refresh his memory on the point, he would find that, so far as the Treasury of that day was concerned—and it never had a better Representative, or one who was more more careful of the expenditure than Lord Lingen—he would find that the Treasury assented through that Report to a principle which would settle the whole question.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): At that time Lord Lingen was not Secretary to the Treasury.

Mr. MUNDELLA: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. Lord Lingen was Secretary to the Treasury during the whole of the time the Committee was sitting. He resigned on the 27th of July, 1885, and the Committee was appointed fully a year before that date. The whole time he sat on that Committee he was the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, and I know that since that time Lord Lingen has not changed his mind. He is of opinion that the Report ought to have been carried out. It would have been wise and economical on the part of the Government to have carried it out. However, I do not blame the Government for not having done so, but I do trust they will take some decisive action in respect of Science and Art teaching. It is a scandal if pupils who come up from the Provinces to attend Science Schools cannot be admitted to Science teaching. For the sake of the work on which we are about to enter—namely, the better technical education of our people, I trust that some better steps with respect to this teaching will be taken.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that he only desired to add a few words to the observations he had already addressed to the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had criticized one of the proposals which was recently made by the Office of Works on the ground that if they excluded the officers who were at present resident in the building at South Kensington it would considerably increase the dangers besetting the Museum—especially in case of fire. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that the experience of the Office of Works was that the presence in buildings of such officers, so far from being of any advantage in the case of fire, or being any protection against fire breaking out, was to increase the danger from fire. What they found was that to protect buildings from fire by police and by night watchmen was by far the best and most practical way. In answer to his hon. Friend the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), the hon. Gentleman was quite right in saying that there had been a reduction in the insurance premium of South Kensington from £400 to £100. He was glad, however, to assure his hon. Friend that there had been no reduction at all in the amount for which they were insured. They were obliged to pay a higher fee at the time the Colonial and other Exhibitions were taking place there. The Insurance Companies insisted upon higher premiums in consequence of the increased danger from fire, because of the proximity of these Exhibitions.

Mr. MUNDELLA asked to be allowed to add one word by way of explanation. He did not mean to say that the officers should reside in the building, but he thought that they should reside in the grounds, some little distance from the building.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that under the wing of the building were four very large and handsome houses, and it was proposed that two of them should be vacated and used to meet the pressing wants of the Institution.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, there was another correction he should like to make. When he spoke of the expenditure of the Science School at Charlottenburg, the Secretary to the Treasury shook his head. He did not mean to say that that Institution cost £500,000 sterling a-year, but that the building cost £500,000, and that £140,000 more had been spent in furniture, appliances, &c.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he rose in consequence of the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). He wished to remark that he was not in the least deterred by what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman from pursuing a very close scrutiny of the expenditure of the country at the present moment on Science and Art. This was not the moment at which such a scrutiny could be made. The most convenient time for criticizing the expenditure would be on the Vote for the general expenditure upon Science and Art. He would give the right hon. Gentleman fair notice, however, that he hoped to be in a position, when the expenditure on Science and Art came up for review, to give some startling particulars of extravagance on a marvellously large scale. If those particulars were brought forward and proved to the satisfaction of the House, the hon. Member for Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe), and others who agreed with him, would very probably have far more money to spend in the way they desired than they had at present. Constantly charges were brought by right hon. Gentlemen opposite against the Government of the country for penuriousness, short-sightedness, and other bad qualities, with respect to Science and Art, and grants for Science and Art buildings. He would like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he would cause to be prepared a Return, showing the expenditure which had been incurred in this country merely on buildings for Science and Art purposes, so that they might know exactly what had been spent, and that they might be able to meet the charges of niggardliness which were constantly brought by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite? If they could find out exactly what had been spent during the last few years upon Science and Art buildings, they would be able to compare the expenditure with that of other countries, and he thought it would be found that our expenditure on Science and Art exceeded that which had been incurred by other countries. At any rate, the Return he proposed would be very useful in view of the continued demands made on the Treasury. Those demands were very popular, and very easy to make, and it was very difficult for the Treasury to incur unpopularity by refusing them. He did not think the House had the remotest idea of the hundreds of thousands of pounds which had been sunk by the country in the payment of Professors' salaries, and in other forms of encouraging Science and Art.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he did not propose to follow the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) in his remarks, which he had listened to with considerable surprise; but he hoped they would hear from some Representative of the Government something more definite upon the question. He listened to the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) with some disappointment. No doubt, he spoke in a sympathetic spirit, but, at the same time, his remarks were not at all definite, and the suggestion he made seemed to be of the nature of a makeshift. With regard to the question of the residence of the officers of the Museum, it was argued that, so far as the prevention of fire was concerned, police were more effective than the officers connected with the Institution could be; but, surely, when a fire had once broken out it must be of great importance to have someone on the spot who knew where the more valuable articles were stored, and what were the best steps to be taken for their protection or removal. They had heard from the hon. Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) of the crowded condition of the physical laboratory. He believed there was on the south side of the road a piece of land belonging to the Commissioners of 1851 which might be acquired. It was very desirable to secure that plot of land at once, because he understood that very probably ordinary houses would otherwise be built upon it, and the opportunity would be lost. It was quite clear that this was a matter which did not concern one Department of the Government merely; and, therefore, he hoped that before the discussion closed they would have the advantage of hearing the views of the right hon. Baronet the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) and of the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson). The subject had been engaging attention for years, and it was now high time something definite was done.

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) said, he sincerely hoped that in the course of the next year something would be done to improve the accommodation at South Kensington. He did not know whether the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) was aware that an annual Exhibition of drawings and prizes in connection with the Science and Art Schools of the United Kingdom took place at South Kensington in the summer months; but he (Mr. W. H. James) had attended these Exhibitions, and had experienced great difficulty in finding them. When he had found the exhibits it was exceedingly difficult to inspect them. These exhibits were prizes which were brought in from the chief centres of the United Kingdom; and it was a pity so little should be known of them. Occasionally he had seen the classes at South Kensington at work. The accommodation was of the most wretched, unsatisfactory, and miserable kind. He was inclined to think that in respect to Science and Art education the feeling of the democracy in the constituencies generally was rather in favour of a lavish expenditure than otherwise. He sincerely hoped the Government would be able to see their way before another year came round to increase this Vote.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had listened to the debate with great interest indeed, and especially to the remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella). He must draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the great complaint made against the Government was that they were penurious. They had heard different stories at different times and in different parts of the country; but he was not ashamed of their penuriousness when it was necessary in the interests of the public purse. He thought it was the duty of the Government to examine the proposals by Departments of the Government with the greatest possible care, and to be perfectly and absolutely certain the expenditure proposed was absolutely necessary in the public interest. Very much had been said this evening which seemed to indicate that other provision was necessary at South Kensington. His noble Friend the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) was amply justified in the remarks he made as to the cost of the buildings which had been erected at South Kensington within the past few years. Complaint had been made with regard to the course pursued by the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had the Treasury to deal with in his day; and he (Mr. W. H. Smith) had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman found that the Treasury exercised a very careful supervision over the demands which were made upon South Kensington; and he had frequently, no doubt, himself been the medium of making demands upon South Kensington which were not always satisfied. The Treasury were simply doing their duty in examining most carefully the demands made from time to time. He admitted they might at the Treasury occasionally prevent the execution of works quite as quickly as they might be demanded by the public; but he wished to take note most distinctly of the fact that the Government desired only to spend money when it was necessary in the public interest, and that they were bound to offer resistance to Departments which from time to time made demands upon them from the point of view of the Department alone, and not from the point of view of the interests of the country at large. He did not wish to make any observations with reference to the particular demand for further accommodation which had been urged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe). It was a matter which demanded the consideration of the Government as a Government, and they must decide as between the Department which was wrong and that which was right, and determine which was the proper course to be taken. He undertook, on the part of the Government, that attention should be given to the question, and that a statement should be made in the House without any unreasonable delay. But he did trust that the House of Commons and the Committee of Supply would not urge the Government, night after night, to make large expenditure, and then expect them to conduct the finances of the country upon economical principles. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington asked that a Return should be given of the money spent upon Science and Art buildings. He should be exceedingly glad to give such a Return; and to make it as full and complete as possible he would suggest that it should be a Return of the cost of South Kensington from its establishment, 20 years ago, down to the present date.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he had great sympathy with Science, but very little with a great deal that was called Art; and he had also great sympathy with what the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had said with regard to economy. Therefore, his feelings with respect to this Vote were a good deal mixed. As an outsider, however, he could not refrain from saying that it did seem to him a shame that South Kensington Museum should be allowed to remain in its present unfinished state. A foreigner must be shocked and astonished that the Establishment should be allowed to remain year after year in its present condition. While he hoped that the Treasury would exercise a wise check upon extravagance, he was bound to say we were not a nation of paupers, and that if we did keep up establishments in this country, those establishments ought to be made to present a decent front to the public. As long as he could remember South Kensington there had been a hideous spectacle of an unfinished front. He hoped the Government would either finish the Establishment or abandon it.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had promised the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington the Return he desired. To make that Return as complete as possible, he suggested that it should not only deal with the cost of buildings, but with the cost of examples from the foundation of the Museum, and with the value of the gifts made to the Museum since its establishment. He was sure that the country had no idea of the value of the Art treasures which the Museum possessed.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he would endeavour to prepare the Return so as to do full justice to the views of the right hon. Gentleman as well as to those of the noble Lord. He wished to allude to one observation which fell from the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). The cost of the proposed addition would be about £300,000. That was the cost arrived at by a very elaborate process of arithmetic. The first outlay was estimated to be £233,000. The experience he had had in dealing with figures was that the outlay was absolutely certain to be exceeded, and that it was very doubtful indeed whether economy could be effected in the Estimate.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL begged the First Lord of the Treasury not to mix up the information he (Lord Randolph Churchill) required, which was valuable information, with the information the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) asked for. How could the Government give an estimate of the value of the gifts to the South Kensington Museum? What he asked for was a Return of the capital outlay on bricks and mortar in connection with South Kensington, and he hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would limit the Return to that outlay. If the right hon. Gentleman opposite wished to have another Return he could move for it.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £8,940, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) said, he trusted that he would be in Order in referring to the question of the lighting of the British Museum at night. It was within the recollection of many hon. Members of the House that last year, in the course of a debate upon this question, the First Lord of the Treasury gave an assurance that the matter should have his full consideration. He (Colonel Duncan) could not find any mention in the Votes of the lighting of the Museum by night. It was possible that this might be owing to the uncertainty of everything in London in consequence of the introduction of the Local Government Bill; but he implored the First Lord of the Treasury and the Government not to forget this subject. There were many people in London who were only able to visit the British Museum at night. Representing, as he did, the district in which the Museum was situated, he asked the House to bear in mind the great success which had attended the opening of Museums at night elsewhere, and reminded the House that the Trustees of the British Museum had already twice recommended that action in the matter should be taken.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, his recollection of the debate of last year was that there was a general concurrence of opinion that the first step in reference to lighting should be taken at the Natural History Museum. That was a most popular Institution for the people of the Metropolis, and he believed that if it were lighted up at night it would be very largely visited.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the Government undertook last year to consider this question very carefully, and they obtained an estimate of the cost of the plant necessary for the lighting up of the Museum, and also of the cost of maintenance. Unfortunately, he had not got the Papers with him, as no Notice was given that this question would be raised. To the best of his recollection, however, it was estimated that the plant itself would involve an outlay of

£30,000, and that the cost of maintenance would amount to £7,000 a-year. That, of course, referred to the two Museums. He believed that the cost of maintenance in the case of the Natural History Museum would be about £3,000 a-year. They had careful observations made as to the frequenters of, perhaps, the more attractive Museum at South Kensington, which was lighted up at night, and they came to the conclusion that they would hardly be justified in asking the House of Commons to incur so large an original outlay, and the annual charge which would be involved. Of course, it was for the House of Commons to say whether the hands of the Government should be forced in a matter of this kind. In addition to a question of cost, there were the dangers incurred in connection with night exhibitions in London to be considered. These Collections were of very great value; indeed, they could not be measured simply by money value, or by their cost. In many cases it would be quite impossible to replace the exhibits if, by any accident, they should be lost, and accidents were more likely to occur at night than in the day-time, when supervision was more easily exercised. The Government took counsel with those who were, next to themselves, bound to care for these Collections, and the view the Trustees held was that they would hardly be justified in asking the Government to incur the risk of lighting up the Museums at night. Under these circumstances, and having given the matter most serious consideration, with the fullest possible desire to open these Collections to the largest number of persons who, by any possibility, might visit them, the Government thought they would not be justified in putting an Estimate on the Vote for the plant required, and for the annual charge which would be involved.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he could only express extreme regret at the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury. He confessed that he was astounded to learn that the cost of plant was so enormous. He should have thought that with the advance of Science the plant would not have been so tremendously expensive. Certainly the lighting of the Natural History Museum at night was not open to as much objection as the lighting of the British Museum. The exhibits were not of a very inflammable character, and if they were destroyed they could be replaced by new ones.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said it was unfortunate that the First Lord of the Treasury had not the figures of the estimate with him. It appeared to him that the estimate as to the cost of the plant was far in excess of what it ought to be; and he was at a loss to understand why the lighting of the British Museum at night should cost £7,000 a-year.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: And the Natural History Museum.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that in that case there was not very much to complain of. It was an intolerable thing that a great Institution like the British Museum should be a closed building to the great mass of the people of London. The Museum was situated in the very heart of the Metropolis, within easy reach of hundreds of thousands of the working people of London; and it was now practically closed to them, except on holidays and times when they could not visit it. Most people did not cease work until 6 or 7 o'clock, and even later, and if Museums were kept open until a reasonable hour at night—say 10 o'clock—they would at once get rid of the very vexed question, on which there were strong opinions on both sides, the Sunday opening of these Institutions. He, as one strongly opposed to the opening of Museums on Sundays, felt that unless they were prepared to meet the people by throwing these Institutions open in the evening, the progress of the Sunday opening movement would be very great. As to the danger attending the lighting of the Museums at night, he could not help thinking that it was much exaggerated. The South Kensington Museum had been open at night for a number of years, and, so far as he remembered, there had never been a serious accident in consequence. He did not see why it should not be as easy to guard against accidents, or why accidents would be more likely to occur, at the British Museum and in the Natural History Museum than at South Kensington.

Mr. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, that last year there was something almost amounting to a promise given by the Government that during the course of the financial year an effort would be made to see whether that which had been so long desired by the London public could not be granted. He could not help feeling that even if the cost were as large as represented by the First Lord of the Treasury, this country ought not to hesitate to defray it, seeing that thereby an opportunity would be afforded to the working and toiling masses of the Metropolis to visit these two great Museums. He was disposed to demur to the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) as to the desirability of first of all lighting up at night the Natural History Museum, because he took it that, for an Institution whose object was to educate the people, the British Museum had a far larger claim on their attention than the Natural History Museum, setting aside for the moment the more central position of the older Institution. He strongly urged the Government, if they wished to afford an opportunity to those who had but few opportunities of seeing these great National Educational Establishments, to turn their attention seriously to the subject.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £4,000, to complete the sum for Edinburgh University Buildings.

(4.) £17,626, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and and Consular Buildings.

(5.) £14,145, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he desired to ask the Minister in charge of the Vote to state what was the condition of the works in connection with Dover Harbour?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, he had no doubt the hon. Gentleman was aware of the answer which was given yesterday by the First Lord of the Treasury to the Question put upon this subject. It would be within the recollection of the Committee that last year, when this question was raised, it was promised that the question as to further expenditure on Dover Harbour should be considered. The question hardly arose upon this Vote, because, as the hon. Member knew, Dover Harbour was rather connected with the building of the convict prison there. However, he had no hesitation in saying that the Government having given their most serious consideration to this question, having gone through the Report of the Committee which sat on the question, and even having regard to the very large expenditure which had been already incurred upon the convict prison at Dover, had come to the conclusion that the cost of such a harbour as had been suggested would be so enormous, and that the advantage was so doubtful, that for the present, at any rate, they ought not to ask Parliament to vote any more money in respect of the Harbour at Dover.

Vote *agreed to.*

(6.) £9,530, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

(7.) £29,180, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

(8.) £148,848, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.

(9.) £7,500, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £163,302, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of several Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations, and for Repayments to Baronies under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883.'"

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he would not agree to postpone the Vote until next Monday, when Members from Ireland could be in their places? He thought it unfair to take Votes of this kind in the absence of Members who were interested in them.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): There is no Notice of any opposition whatever against this Vote, or the next. If there had been the slightest intimation of opposition, I should not have taken them to-night; but the hon. Gentleman may be satisfied that the Report will not be taken until the time he has named.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he rather demurred to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Notice of opposition to the Vote, because many questions might arise upon them with regard to which Members did not feel themselves bound to give Notice on the Paper. However, he would not press that point. With regard to the National Education Buildings, he believed it was a fact that the Estimates of previous years had been very considerably exceeded by the National Education Commissioners in connection with buildings for ordinary schools. The position of the Treasury and the Board of Works (Ireland) and the National Education Commissioners had been recently considered; certain resolutions had been adopted; certain regulations drawn up and instructions issued to the National Education Commissioners. Those instructions would limit the powers of the Commissioners to advance money for building schools under the Statute now in force. But many managers of schools had undertaken liabilities under what they considered to be a Parliamentary guarantee, and the restrictions imposed would very materially embarrass a number of gentlemen who had no reason whatsoever to suppose that the powers of the National Education Commissioners would be curtailed or suspended. That was the first point that he had to bring before the attention of the Government. His next point was connected with the Ulster Canal. Last year the Canal figured for the sum of £705. The Canal was in the hands of the Government; it was a security which they had taken, and it had constituted a heavy charge on the Exchequer for many years. The Government had tried from time to time to get rid of it; but the terms offered by the parties were so onerous and unreasonable that the House had refused to entertain them. The sum now proposed in aid of the Ulster Canal was, that year, £1,500, and there was no explanation whatever of the increase. He should be glad to receive some information from the Secretary to the Treasury on this subject. Then, on page 83, there was the sum of £5,000 on account of repayment of the balance under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act of 1883. He believed the Government were able to advance the sum of £40,000 a-year, at the rate of 2 per cent on the amount of capital invested, where the guarantee of the barony had been given and had been discharged by payment of a percentage of the guaranteed dividends. He asked what were the baronies which had made payment, and what were the Companies to whom payment had been made, and also the amounts paid?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, that the relation between the Treasury and the Board of Works and the National Education Commissioners in Dublin had been very correctly stated by the hon. Member as having recently undergone considerable revision. As he had explained to the House on a previous occasion, it had come to the knowledge of the Treasury that the grants approved by the National Education Commissioners had largely exceeded the provision made by Parliament, and it was necessary that some arrangement should be come to by which effective control should be exercised over those grants, and particularly with regard to the point of Supplementary Estimates. It had been his duty to put matters in such a form that there should be effective financial control, and that Supplementary Estimates should, if possible, be avoided, at the same time without disregarding what, at present at all events, he considered to be the obligation of the Government, as far as possible, to keep to the grants which had already been approved. Although he had not yet received figures which would enable him to give particular information to the Committee, yet he was having a statement prepared which would show in detail the amount of expenditure upon every school for which a grant had been sanctioned, and which was likely to come in course of payment during the current financial year and during subsequent years. He hoped that when he received those figures it would be found that the £40,000 in the Estimates for this year might be, if not entirely adequate to meet the actual requirements, at all events so nearly adequate that no Supplementary Estimates would be necessary, and no serious inconvenience would happen in the case of schools in process of building. The sum of £40,000 a-year for the next three years ought, in his opinion, to meet the full requirements of the case. With regard to the Ulster Canal, the cost of its maintenance had been in recent years, upon the average, about £1,100. It often happened, of course, that the expenditure was more in one year than another, according to the amount of work undertaken, and repairs necessary in particular years. With regard to the payments by baronies under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, he need not remind the Committee that Parliament had, on former occasions, passed Acts which imposed upon the Exchequer certain charges with regard to tramways made under certain Statutes if they did not earn sufficient money to meet the interest guaranteed. He did not wish to take a gloomy view of the matter; but he was afraid that some of the tramways sanctioned, like railways similarly sanctioned, would not, for some time at least, earn sufficient to pay the guaranteed interest, and that a larger sum than was asked for this year might be found necessary to meet the deficiency which might arise. The sum in the present Estimate had been arrived at on careful inquiry in each case. He had a list of the amounts likely to be earned and expended, and of the amount of charge likely to come upon the Exchequer. He was not able to furnish the names of the baronies at that moment; but he could give the hon. Member the names of the Companies. The total amount of increase was £9,000, and, therefore, in taking £5,000, the Government had made provision for very little more than half.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the Secretary to the Treasury had told the Committee little beyond the fact that, although £700 a-year had been taken for some years on account of the Canal, that amount had always been exceeded. This was one of the things which made proceedings in that House so unsatisfactory. The Estimates were really no check upon the expenditure of the Government, and had never been a check upon the Board of Works in Ireland. The Ulster Canal was a bad bargain, and, in his opinion, every sovereign spent upon it, so far as the public interest was concerned, had been practically thrown away. An Estimate was now brought forward exceeding by more than 100 per cent what had been asked for in former years.

Mr. JACKSON said, that what he had stated was that the average expenditure amounted to £1,100, although that amount was sometimes exceeded. He had explained to the Committee that last year £705 was taken, because it was not anticipated that this amount would be exceeded; but it was found that a larger expenditure would be necessary this year, and accordingly £1,500 had been taken. He did not mean to convey that the expenditure in previous years had exceeded the Estimates, but only that the expenditure varied from year to year.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had no wish to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman. The Canal did not pay even the wages of the lock-keepers, and there was no justification for spending upon it an annually increasing sum. The Government would, in his opinion, do well to wash their hands of it. It was a bad security, and he must certainly protest against the present increase by moving the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £400, which would bring down the amount to what had been found sufficient for several years.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £162,902, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. JACKSON said, he could hardly state with what pleasure he had listened to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman. Every year, for the last five or six years, the Government had been endeavouring to carry a Bill for the purpose of effecting that which the hon. Member suggested—namely, to get rid of this annual charge. Such a Bill was introduced last year, but they had been unable to obtain opportunities for passing it. He was extremely anxious to get rid of the Canal, and agreed with every word which had fallen from the hon. Member with respect to the bad bargain which the Government had made, and which they were most desirous of parting with. He would not say why they had been unable to succeed. The hon. Member was probably aware that there was before Parliament at that time a Bill promoted by the Lagan Navigation Company seeking powers to take over the Canal. He hoped that Bill would become law during the present Session, and then the Government would have an opportunity of getting rid of this annual charge of about £1,100 a-year, and at the same time of accomplishing some good for several districts in Ireland, by opening up communication from Belfast to the other side of the country as a means of cheapening freights, carrying coals, and competing with as well as keeping the railways in order. He therefore hoped the hon. Member would not press his Motion, but that he would assist the Government in passing the Bill to which he had referred.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was perfectly well acquainted with the provisions of the Bill brought in year after year to enable the Government to get rid of this Canal. He had always, however, looked upon the proposed arrangement as a job, and had therefore opposed the Bill. The Government had, year after year, submitted the proposal that the Canal should be handed over to the Lagan Navigation Company, with the condition that the Company should be paid £10,000 by way of a douceur. If the Canal was of any use to the Company, by all means let them have it, but why, he asked, should they receive £10,000 as well. The Company having at first asked £10,000, on finding that that was opposed, moderated their terms, but they still wanted a considerable sum. The amount which the Committee were now asked to vote was probably intended to put the Canal in as good a condition as was possible for the Lagan Navigation Company. The Government could get rid of the Canal by a stroke of the pen, and he did not see why this further expenditure should be incurred. He could inform the hon. Gentleman that the idea of a canal between Belfast and the Shannon was simply moonshine. There was no water to float a boat in some parts, and the idea of communication described by the hon. Gentleman was altogether chimerical. As his contention was that the Government could get rid of the Canal and wipe this item off the Estimates, he felt it his duty to press his Motion to a Division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 46; Noes 93: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether it was the practice to establish police barracks in the huts of evicted tenants, and whether a rent of three times the tenant's rent was paid for them? He pointed out that this practice led to an injustice in the case of tenants who were resisting the extortionate demands of landlords, because the Government paid the landlord a higher rent than he before obtained. He knew of one case in which three times the original rent of £15 had been paid to the landlord under the circumstances he had referred to. The Constabulary in Ireland were already sufficiently unpopular; but he looked upon this as the most odious use to which they could be put—namely, that of placing them in the hovels of evicted tenants.

The CHAIRMAN said, he must point out to the hon. Member that his remarks had no reference to the present Vote. The hon. Gentleman would have an opportunity of referring to this subject when the Votes of Class III. were reached.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, N.) said, he joined in the protest of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) against the Government taking this Vote in the absence of Irish Members, and if there was one circumstance more than another to which Irish Members would be likely to take exception, it was that the Vote provided for the maintenance of police in barracks. He found various sums charged for police barracks at Belfast, Roscommon, and Carlow, and he was bound to say that in his opinion all this money had been very badly expended. There were already too many barracks in Ireland. His attention had been directed the other day to the fact that in one town in Scotland, where there was a population of 35,000, the number of policemen did not exceed 18. Let the Committee compare that with a town in Ireland of 3,000 inhabitants, in which there were two police barracks, one at either end of the town, in each of which 15 or 20 policemen were stationed. He asked whether it was the intention of the Government to continue to spend the money of the taxpayers on the erection of police barracks in view of the time which he believed was fast approaching when all these police arrangements in Ireland would be done away with?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I can assure the hon. Member that the amount of barrack accommodation is strictly regulated by the number of police necessarily stationed in the district.

MR. NOLAN said, in view of the unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, he felt it his duty to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £3,000.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £160,302, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Nolan.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 38; Noes 99: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(11.) £35,500, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked, whether the designs for these buildings were now satisfactory, and whether they had arrived at the end of this Vote?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he should not like to promise that they had reached the end of this expenditure. He thought the Committee had had to-night an example of the pressure constantly put upon the Government in matters of the kind. He was afraid there would be some expenditure both on account of furniture and fittings, in order to make the building habitable. It was true that there had been an increase on the Estimate, but there had been also a considerable enlargement of the buildings originally contemplated. The Government had no reason to believe that the contract which had been taken for the work would show any unreasonable excess.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he should like to hear the hon. Gentleman say that this Vote did complete the expenditure for the building. The building was exceedingly handsome, and, so far as he was able to judge, it was the best of its kind that had been produced during the last quarter of a century.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £37,731, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, the House was aware that a Royal Commission had been appointed about 18 months ago to inquire into the Public Departments for the conduct of Business and into the scale of their expenditure. That Commission, however, had no power to inquire into the expenditure of the House of Lords. It appeared to him that no one would argue that the expenditure of the two Houses of Parliament did not require revision, and that they were not conducted on the most lavish scale. A very large number of persons were employed, while the work could probably be done by a smaller number, and many of these persons appeared to receive a higher salary than was necessary. But, whether this were so or not, it was an important fact that the two Houses of Parliament were not within the scope of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Public Departments. Certainly an inquiry ought to be made into the present establishment of the two Houses. The First Lord of the Treasury would recollect that it had been his intention, when at the Exchequer, to propose the appointment of a joint Commission of both Houses to review their respective establishments. When he mentioned his proposal in that House it was not ill-received, and if things had gone on in their normal way the proposal might have been carried out. He believed that a very considerable reduction might be made in the expenditure of the Houses of Parliament. Of course there was a much larger question in connection with the Private Bill legislation of the two Houses. If a Committee of the two Houses came to the conclusion to remove all Private Bill legislation from the Houses of Parliament, then a much larger reduction would be possible. But apart from that, there was every reason to suppose that the expenditure of the two Houses was higher than it need be, and he would press upon the First Lord of the Treasury the advisability of appointing a Committee of both Houses for the purpose of reviewing their expenditure, which amounted to an enormous sum of money. The two Houses managed to spend on themselves something like £120,000 a-year. That expenditure had never been inquired into, as far as he was aware, and in view of the fact he trusted that his suggestion would receive favourable consideration at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): It will be in the recollection of the Committee that last Session a discussion arose upon this Vote, and that I then undertook, on the part of the Government that inquiry should be made, at any rate in the House of Lords, as to the extent of the expenditure of that House. I am hardly aware, however, of the suggestion made by the noble Lord, that a Joint Committee should sit to inquire into the expenses of the two Houses of Parliament. The suggestion, however, that the subject should be treated in that way is very well worthy of consideration, and I think it is possible that a Joint Committee might be able to effect economies which would be acceptable to both Houses. But my noble Friend the Prime Minister has been engaged with a small Committee of the House of Lords in investigating the expense of the establishment of that House, and my noble Friend mentioned to me a few days ago that he had every reason to hope he would be able to recommend considerable economies in the expenditure. But as the Committee is still sitting, and has not reported, it would be premature for me to make any statement in respect of alterations which my noble Friend believes can be effected. As far as the House of Commons is concerned, I do not know whether the expenditure is greater than might reasonably be expected for Gentlemen of whom a large amount of attendance is required in the public interest. Still, I shall be exceedingly glad if the noble Lord's suggestion can be adopted. Without pledging myself absolutely, I will undertake to confer with those who are well acquainted with the subject, and with the authorities of the House; and I will endeavour to make some recommendation to the House with the view of securing that this question shall be fully, impartially and carefully considered. The arrangement I made with the House occurred very late in the Session, and sufficient time has not elapsed for maturing the recommendations which may come down from the House of Lords, but as I have said the whole matter shall have our consideration.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he regretted to have to state that the right hon. Gentleman's reply was eminently unsatisfactory. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would have been more correct if he had said it would be premature if the Committee passed this Vote rather than that it was premature to state what would be done because the Committee was still sitting. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) pointed out that seven or eight months had elapsed since the right hon. Gentleman agreed, under great pressure, to have a Committee appointed, and now he came down and claimed to have carried out his pledge, by saying that the Committee had not finished its investigation. That seemed to him a most extraordinary way of fulfilling a pledge given in the House of Commons, and he ventured to say that if the Committee had passed this Vote without protest, the right hon. Gentleman would come down, after another nine months had elapsed, with his usual suavity of manner, and say that they must wait a little longer. He thought under the circumstances he was justified in saying that the right hon. Gentleman was trifling with the House. The sums paid to officials in the House of Lords were ridiculously high as compared with the officials of the House of Commons who had much more onerous duties to perform. The Sergeant-at-Arms in attendance on the Lord Chancellor had £1,500 a-year; then the Messenger to the Crown Solicitor had a salary of £1,500 a-year. But all these officers received additional payments for various offices which they discharged, besides their regular duties. The best way of dealing with this subject, however, was to make a comparison between the two Houses. He found that the Chairman of Ways and Means received £2,500, and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords received the same salary, yet 20 minutes or half-an-hour was the average length of a sitting of the House of Lords, taking one sitting with another throughout the year. The Counsel to the Chairman of Committees received £1,500 per annum; the Examiner of Standing Orders £900; the Clerk of the Parliament £2,500, in addition to £500 as an allowance for a house; the Clerk Assistant £1,800; the Reading Clerk £1,200; the Chief Clerk of the Parliament Office £1,200; the Senior Clerk £1,000; the other Senior Clerks £1,000 each. He presumed that some of these gentlemen belonged to that mysterious body of gentlemen whose work it was to say "*La Reine le veut*" when the Royal Assent was given to Bills. Among other ornamental officials was Black Rod, an officer who received £2,000 a-year and also received emoluments as Admiral on the Retired List, in addition to fees which he received for his own use as an officer of the Garter. He thought this gentleman must be a happy man to have so many official salaries to draw at the expense of the taxpayers of the country; while his only duty was to take part in the piece of periodical tomfoolery of knocking at the door of the House of Commons and summoning the Speaker to attend the House of Lords, and to give Members of the House of Commons leave to take ladies and gentlemen into the other House. Then there was the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, who received £1,000, and the principal Doorkeeper, who received £600 for discharging duties which any ordinary porter could be found to perform for 25*s.* a-week. Then there was a further array of Assistant Messengers and Porters who received £2,225 between them, and there was a Librarian who received £810. The duties of this gentleman must be very light; because he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was satisfied that not one Peer in a dozen ever read a book in the Library of the House of Lords or elsewhere. This gentleman, however, had the aid of an Assistant Librarian with the salary of £439. He would not pursue the subject further than to say that the Estimates of the House of Lords were a perfect scandal, and he was not at all surprised that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had risen to protest against them. As he would not be in Order in moving the postponement of this Vote, he should propose its reduction by the sum of £1,000, part of the salary of the Chairman of Committees.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B, £5,000,—Department of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords,—be reduced by the sum of £1,000."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he did not think the First Lord of the Treasury had a clear recollection of what passed last year on this Vote. The salaries of the officers of the House of Lords were then discussed at length on a Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). In the course of that discussion he (Mr. Childers) had called the attention of the House to the discrepancy between the salaries of the officials of the two Houses.

The CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Motion before the Committee was for the reduction of the Vote in respect of a single item, and that this should be disposed of before the subject referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was dealt with.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was quite willing to withdraw his Motion in order to allow the right hon. Gentleman to proceed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. CHILDERS said, on the occasion referred to it was his duty to take part in the debate, and he had called especial attention to the great excess of the Estimate for the House of Lords over that of the House of Commons. On that occasion, he had ventured to make an appeal to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who was opposing the Vote, to withdraw his amendment, if the First Lord of the Treasury would give an undertaking that when a vacancy arose, the successor to the office should not receive more than the amount of salary that would be paid in the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman had replied that he would undertake on the part of the Government, that the subject should receive consideration in the spirit in which he (Mr. Childers) had suggested it should be considered; and that although he could not undertake absolutely that when vacancies occurred, the salaries should be in each case and in every respect in accordance with the salaries in the House of Commons, he would give an engagement that full inquiry should be made with a view to the salaries being brought down to the amounts paid in the House of Commons. He (Mr. Childers) was not then quite satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and, in reply to his further observations, the right hon. Gentleman said he would undertake to open negotiations with the other House with a view to carry out this arrangement at once. The right hon. Gentleman had now told the Committee that he had had some communication with his Colleagues and the Prime Minister with reference to this matter; but he would point out that this was a very different thing from opening negotiations to carry out the arrangement at once—namely, that the officials in the House of Lords should be put on the same footing as those in the House of Commons. Under the circumstances, he thought the Committee must call for something more definite from the right hon. Gentleman. The matter was an important one, and ought not to be put off. In his opinion, some pressure should be used, and that it should be shown that the wish of the House of Commons in this affair was paramount. He would, therefore, urgently ask the Secretary to the Treasury to allow this Vote to be withdrawn for the present, as there was no urgency in the matter, in order that a Joint Committee of the two Houses might be immediately appointed to consider the whole question. If necessary, Votes on Account could, of course, be taken; but they ought not to allow this very important matter to drag on. It was, therefore, important that the Joint Committee should be appointed to go into the matter.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) is asking rather more than the circumstances of the case demand. The discussion to which he refers, took place in the month of July last year, when, under the circumstances in which we were placed, it was almost impossible to get together an adequate Committee charged with these duties in the House of Lords. At the earliest time this year, however, the Committee met to consider the question, and is now pursuing its inquiries. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that the revision of salaries which might be proposed could not, in justice, be made to apply to the present year. What we wished at the time was, that as vacancies occurred, no office should be filled without due consideration, with regard to the engagement made. Well, Sir, that has been done. The principle has been acted on in the case of the office of Taxing Master to the House of Lords which has been vacated. The late holder of the Office received £1,000 a-year, and the Office has been filled by the appointment of a person to perform the duties at £250 a-year and two clerks at £150 a-year each, the gross payment being now £550 in lieu of £1,000 formerly paid. It is perfectly true that there is an increase in the Vote, of this amount, as the Taxing Master's fees did not appear at all, but as the fees will now be paid into the Exchequer, there will be a saving of £450 a-year with reference to this Office. I only mention this by way of evidence that the Treasury and the Government are anxious to carry out the engagement made, that it is being carried out, and that the inquiry is of a searching character. It was not suggested last year that the inquiry should be conducted by a Joint Committee, and I think it only reasonable to leave it to the House of Lords to make its own proposals with regard to any reduction of the establishment that may be considered desirable. But I have undertaken now to consider whether a Joint Committee of the two Houses can sit with advantage. I am inclined to regard the proposal with great favour, because it is most desirable that there should be agreement between the two Houses as to the cost of their establishments. The present inquiry has already proceeded to some extent; but I should certainly be disposed to press upon my Colleagues in the House of Lords, the desirability of the appointment of a Joint Committee. I trust I have said enough to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman opposite that Her Majesty's Government have done as much as they could reasonably be expected to do in the time which has elapsed to fulfil their engagement. We have already effected an economy in respect of one Office alone, and the Committee may be assured that steps will be taken in the direction of further economy as vacancies arise.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought the statement of the right hon. Gentleman quite satisfactory. It would be hardly possible for the Government to withdraw the Vote, as it would appear like a refusal of the House of Commons to pay the salaries of the present year. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) opposite would see that the withdrawal of the Vote under the circumstances could not take place without great disrespect being shown to the other House, and he would go further, and say that had he known that the pledge given by the Government last year had been carried out as it now appeared to have been, he should have abstained from the remarks he had made. He agreed that it was impossible that an inquiry could have been conducted in the short space of time—barely one month—that remained of last Session; and it would not have been easy to get together an authoritative Committee of the House of Lords to sit through the months of August and September. They had heard that the Committee had made great progress. He did not know how it was composed; but they might expect that it would make its Report before long, that it would be in the direction of economy and that it would be communicated to that House. He therefore hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bring into this discussion no unnecessary heat or accusations, but be satisfied with the general assurance which his right hon. Friend had been able to give with regard to the steps to be taken for the solution of the question. There seemed to be a general agreement between both sides, that steps should be taken to review the Establishment of both Houses, and he had a distinct recollection that in the Autumn Session of 1886, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, he had proposed that there should be a Joint Committee appointed; and that this proposal was accepted by his Colleagues at the time. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had urged that the salaries in the House of Lords should be reduced to the level of those in the House of Commons; but that, in his opinion, would not be at all adequate. It was most desirable that there should be a Joint Committee; because, otherwise, either House would be indisposed to make its salaries lower. If they appointed a Joint Committee the Members of both Houses would come together, and the whole subject, having regard to the work to be performed, would be threshed out, and a better result would follow. He believed that a considerable reduction would take place in respect of the Establishments of both Houses when the subject had been thoroughly examined in the way suggested, by a Committee empowered to take evidence as to hours, labour, and remuneration of the officials. He felt confident that the First Lord of the Treasury would press this question upon his Colleagues and that no unreasonable delay would take place, so that when the next Session came round, the two Houses would be in possession of fuller information on the subject of their respective expenditures.

Mr. CHILDERS: After the explanation given by the First Lord of the Treasury I may be permitted to say that I am satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman did act in the spirit of the pledge which he made last year. I was not aware of the alteration which has been made in the case of the successor of the late Taxing Master of the House of Lords. I was under the impression that there had been too great delay, but I am now satisfied that this is not the case, and therefore agree with the noble Lord that we ought not to postpone the Vote. If the right hon. Gentleman will undertake that a Joint Committee shall be shortly appointed, I think the object I had in view will be obtained.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he should like to hear from the First Lord of the Treasury the names of the Members of the Committee of the House of Lords and how often the Committee had met.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I should be glad to give the hon. Member the information asked for if I had it, but at this moment I do not know the names of the Members of the Committee. I have stated to the Committee all the information received from the Prime Minister to-day, and also the information conveyed to the Secretary to the Treasury by the Clerk of the Parliaments. With regard to the sittings of the Committee, it has met more than once, and I know that considerable progress has been made in the direction of economy. That I say on my responsibility in this House, and with it I trust the hon. Member will be satisfied. I am personally in favour of a Joint Committee being appointed, and I hope it will be possible to arrange that such a Committee shall take this matter into consideration; but I must of course confer with my Colleagues and the Prime Minister on the subject before giving an undertaking that the Committee will be appointed.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Am I to understand that the Committee of the Black Rod Department is considering the whole expenditure voted by this House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, whether the Secretary to the Treasury had any information as to the number of times the Committee had sat? Was it correct to say that the Committee had only met once? Because, if so, how was it possible to say that considerable progress had been made?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, there was considerable difficulty in giving particular information on this subject, and the question with regard to how many times the Committee had met formally was one which he was unable to answer. But he was able to assure the hon. Member that the investigation which was being made was most thorough, and reached throughout the whole expenditure of the House of Lords. From the information given that day he had come to the conclusion that there had been a very searching inquiry, and that the proceedings of the Committee were approaching a point at which they would be able to report the result of their investigations.

Mr. MUNDELLA asked, if the hon. Gentleman would communicate the Report to that House?

Mr. JACKSON said, he was unable to answer that question until the Committee had reported to its own House.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, if the hon. Gentleman would give the names of the Committee, and the number of times it had met by the time the Report of the Vote was taken.

Mr. JACKSON said, he had no hesitation in saying that he would inquire whether there was any objection to that proposal. As far as he was concerned, he was perfectly willing to do so.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would put the question again on Monday.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he thought it would be exceedingly unfair to press the Financial Secretary to the Treasury any further on this matter. He desired to ask the hon. Gentleman if he could give an explanation of the system under which officials of the House of Lords were placed on the retired list. There was in the House of Lords an anomalous institution called the Fee Fund. A sum of money was invested, and the interest, together with fees on judicial proceedings, Private Bills, and the taxation of costs, was paid into the fund, while, on the other hand, various sums were written off; one was paid into the Exchequer, another went as remuneration to those concerned in the taxation of costs, and a third sum was applied for superannuation allowances to certain officers of the House of Lords. It was with regard to the last item that he desired information, and he asked what was the authority which decided upon the retiring and pensioning of the officers of the House of Lords? Who was it that decided when money was to be drawn from the Fee Fund for superannuation allowances; and what was the authority which sanctioned the grant which was annually made from the Exchequer, extra receipts in respect of the Fee Fund in aid of the retiring allowances? All these things were so mixed up as to be perfectly unintelligible; he defied anyone thoroughly to understand from the Paper the system on which the retiring allowances to the officers of the House of Lords were regulated. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to impart some information on this subject, which he assured him could be done without any breach of confidence.

Mr. JACKSON said, the hon. Member was aware that there was a sum at the disposal of the House of Lords, the result of the accumulation of fees received. This fund, which amounted to about £43,000, is invested, and the deficiency of interest supplemented to the extent which might be necessary for the payment of these pensions. It was generally supposed that they were granted on a much higher scale than obtained generally throughout the Civil Service. He was not able to say that there were no cases in which the Committee charged with the duty in the House of Lords had not granted pensions on a higher scale, but he was sure that the general practice was to follow exactly the scale of remuneration adopted by the Treasury. If cases were to be found in which exception might be taken on the ground of departure from the general rule, there were also cases in which the same objection would apply to the action of the Treasury with regard to the Civil Service. The fees went to make up the pensions, and the balance was paid over to the Exchequer. In the case referred to by the First Lord, the officer in question was paid out of the fees received; but his successors would be paid by salary, so that the House would know exactly what was received. The fees would henceforward be paid into the Exchequer, and the arrangement in the case of the Office of Taxing Master had secured a saving of something like 40 per cent.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the hon. Gentleman had not answered his question as to what authority sanctioned the allowances on retirement of Officers in the House of Lords. Was it the Black Rod, the Treasury, or the House of Lords? It would appear that the Fee Fund was in the hands of some official of the House of Lords over whom the Treasury had no control whatever. If the Fee Fund was insufficient to pay the retiring allowances, the fees which would otherwise be paid into the Exchequer were drawn upon for the sums necessary to supplement it; in other words, there was an authority independent of the House of Commons competent to place on the retired list any officer of the House of Lords; and in order to furnish each pension, that authority had power to draw not only on the Fee Fund, but also on the fees which, in the ordinary course, ought to be paid into the Exchequer.

Mr. JACKSON said, that beyond the information he had given that a Committee of the other House awarded the pensions in question, he could not answer the question of the hon. Member. He thought he had made it clear, that although the pensions were not awarded by the Treasury, they were on the scale adopted by the Treasury in dealing with Civil Service pensions generally. He sympathized with the hon. Gentleman in his desire to have everything relating to these matters in order, and he believed he was justified in saying that this was one of the questions which was being considered.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, how far the duties of the Clerks of the House of Lords corresponded with those of the Clerks of the House of Commons?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: In answer to the hon. Gentleman, I believe the Clerks referred to conduct the Business of the House of Lords between them in precisely the same way as the Clerks of the House of Commons conduct our Business. But they have also to take charge of the Judicial Business of the House of Lords, and in November and December those officers have to be in attendance from 10 o'clock till 4.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had called attention to the fact that the Senior Clerk had a number of Judicial Clerks under him at £150 a-year, and also a Clerk of the Journals. He understood what the Clerks in the House of Commons did; but surely the Clerk of the Parliaments, the Clerk Assistant, and the Chief Clerk of the House of Lords did not take part in the judicial duties of the House of Lords?

Mr. JACKSON said, he had gone into the question, and he believed that if the Chief Clerk were challenged he would be able to show as good a record as any officer in that House.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he regarded the salaries now received by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod and by the Yeoman Usher as excessive, and he should therefore move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,500, being £1,000 in respect of the salary of Black Rod, and £500 in respect of the salary of the Yeoman Usher.

Motion made, and Question put,

"That Item E, £6,075—Department of Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Salaries—be reduced by the sum of £1,500."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 33; Noes 78: Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 60.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(13.) £43,387, to complete the sum for House of Commons Offices.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that when last year he raised the question of the appointment of Clerks to the Staff of the House, he had pointed out that, whereas the whole of the Civil Service outside the House was practically open to competition, and the old system of patronage and nomination had been abolished, here, at the head-quarters of government, no such system prevailed, and the appointment of Clerk to the House was a close borough, admission to which was obtainable only by privilege. At the time the First Lord, or an official representing the Treasury, undertook to communicate with the officer in charge of the Department, in order to ascertain whether the practice in the House might not be assimilated to that which prevailed in other Departments of the Service, and whether the appointments might not be thrown open to public competition. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether that communication had resulted in any arrangement being made?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, he had no information to give the Committee which would lead them to look forward to the appointments being very shortly thrown open. He understood that there was for them what was called limited competition. A certain number of gentlemen were called upon, amongst whom there was competition before admission took place. There was a very limited number of offices to be filled, and he was informed that the present system worked well.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, his proposal would do no injury to any man on the Establishment of the House of Commons at the present moment. He was not attacking any person; he was merely claiming for the public at large the right of access to the offices. The hon. Gentleman said that the present system was working well; but, of course, every system worked well in the opinion of those who benefited by it. They had removed the old system of nomination and patronage in the great majority of cases; why, then, was it maintained in the House of Commons? They could set up any standard of fitness they might wish, and they might exact any qualifications, however delicate they might be; they had Commissions perfectly fitted to test the qualifications of men for any post, however exceptional. Why, then, should they refuse to enforce the system of open competition which had answered well in the India Service and in the Civil Service generally, and which anyone would suppose would be adopted in the House of Commons? There was nothing that stood in the way of open competition in the House of Commons but a very narrow piece of personal patronage, which ought not to be allowed to stand in bar of the very fair claim of thousands for employment in the Civil Service. Although the system had worked well for those who obtained the appointments, it had not done so for those who had no chances of admission. He asked the hon. Gentleman what answer he had received to the inquiry which he undertook to make last year with the view of seeing whether these posts could not be thrown open, but to that he had received no answer. Had the hon. Gentleman received a point-blank refusal—had the officer in charge of the department said that he would not surrender his patronage? But if there was any moot point between the hon. Gentleman and the officer in charge, he might possibly have it settled by Monday next, when the Report came up. If he could promise that, he (Mr. O'Connor) should be satisfied; but it was an anomaly that the House of Commons should be the last entrenchment of a system of patronage which had been most successfully attacked.

Mr. JACKSON said, he had no objection to the hon. Member putting a further question to him on Report, if he desired to do so. He had endeavoured to convey to the Committee that the result of the inquiries he had made had not led him to the conclusion that he could usefully press this matter in the particular way which the hon. Gentleman appeared to suggest. There was patronage in the appointments, no doubt, and it used to be close patronage; but a considerable step had been taken in the direction in which the hon. Gentleman desired to travel, because it was not now by nomination but by limited competition that the offices were filled. He was sure that those charged with this responsible duty had far more regard to the manner in which the work was done than to the particular point of patronage. His intention had been to convey his belief that the system worked well so far as the duties discharged in that House were concerned. No doubt the system of open competition had led to the admission into the Services of a large number of very able men; but they did hear sometimes of men who, although they had passed examinations extremely well, was not always perfectly successful in the performance of the particular duties which they were called upon to discharge. He had no objection to saying that he would take up the question again, and see whether any further effect could be given to the wishes expressed.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Vote *agreed to.*

(14.) £50,222, to complete the sum for the Treasury.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the reason of the increase in the charge for the office of Parliamentary Counsel? It was £4,465 last year, and it was now £5,000. Parliamentary Counsel, who previously received £2,500, seemed to have their salaries increased to £2,811, and there was still the same number of them.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, this was a growing charge, as the hon. Member knew; but in recent years there had been an increase in the salary of the second officer. Parliamentary Counsel, as the hon. Member knew, received salaries which increased from time to time. The salaries began at £2,500, and went on to £3,000.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that was not the arrangement. The arrangement was that the Parliamentary Counsel should have £2,500 for two years, and then have £3,000 instead of £2,500; but here they saw the amount put down at £2,811. He should like to know on what system they paid for Parlimentary Counsels' work. Take such a Bill as the Employers' Liability Bill, which was founded upon the Report of a Select Committee. The drafting of that Bill had to be placed in the hands of some competent draughtsman; but, allowing any amount of time for the preparation of the Local Government Bill, and one or two other Bills which the Government had in hand, there would appear to have been abundant leisure for the Parliamentary counsel or his assistant to draft such a Bill as the Employers' Liability Bill. He wished to know whether any portion of £2,811 for Parliamentary counsel, or of £1,500 for the assistant counsel, was taken in consideration of such a Bill as the Employers' Liability Bill, or was that Bill given up to some other counsel who were *en rapport* with the Treasury, and who received special fees for their work, and if so, would the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) say who these counsel were?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, the course of business was this. There were, as the hon. Gentleman knew, two permanent draftsmen at the Parliamentary Draftsmen's Office, and under ordinary circumstances when Bills had to be prepared for the Government, those gentlemen prepared them. But there were measures upon the drafting of which special knowledge had to be brought to bear, such as the Land Transfer Bill, and other Bills of a complicated nature, and in connection with these measures particular counsel were employed. As to the Employers' Liability Bill, he thought that had been entirely drawn by the Home Secretary and the ordinary Parliamentary draftsmen. He was not able to mention the name of the special counsel who have been engaged on particular Bills; but he did know this, that since he had had the honour of holding his present Office from the year 1885, special gentlemen who happened to have been specially acquainted with certain subjects, had been engaged at ordinary fees to take part in the work of drafting.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should like to know with reference to the next item—namely, "Fees to Counsel," what there was in the circumstances of the present year which rendered it necessary to raise the sum of £1,200, which was quite adequate last year, to £1,500 this year. Unless he was greatly mistaken the number of Bills which it had been necessary to deal with this year had not been particularly heavy.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, that in the first place during the present year the drafting had been very heavy indeed, and in addition to that, as was generally known, Mr. Jenkyns had been ill, though he was now quite recovered. There had probably been as great pressure on the Drafting Office during the last nine months as there had ever been during any equal period since the office had come into existence.

Vote *agreed to.*

(15.) £80,734, to complete the sum for the Home Office.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, he wished to call the attention of the Committee to a portion of the work of the Home Office, which, so far as he knew, that Office had no apparatus for doing, and which the country would not think did this work satisfactorily. There was hardly any Department of the State, so far as he was aware, which had undergone so many alterations as had the Home Office; but in regard to the specific Department to which he was about to refer, there had been no change whatever. There had been new functions thrown upon the Home Office; but for the discharge of the new duties involved new machinery had always been provided, and everyone he thought would admit that the Home Office, generally speaking, had discharged its work very well; but there was a good deal of the old work of the Office for which there was only old machinery or no machinery at all with regard to which good reason for complaint arose. The jurisdiction of the Home Office in capital cases was always about as important a function as the Office could perform, as it left in the hands of a single Minister decisions in cases of life and death. That jurisdiction was always important; but he ventured to say that in recent years when life got to be considered as much more sacred than it used to be in the old days, and sentences were more lenient than was formerly the case, the exercise of this jurisdiction was a much more delicate matter than in years gone by. It had also become more extended, because, as a matter of fact, whereas in the old days the jurisdiction of the Home Office, that was to say of the Secretary of State for the Home Department acting in the name of the Crown, and by virtue of the Prerogative of the Crown, exercised his jurisdiction chiefly under the jurisdiction of Parliament. Now, Sir, to a great extent the idea of the Parliament had dropped out of the jurisdiction, and as a matter of fact, the Home Secretary acted to a great extent as a Court of review and in reality re-tried prisoners, and reviewed the decisions of Judges at the Home Office. His (Mr. Hanbury's) contention was, that for work of this kind there was no provision at the Home Office at the present time. The work almost wholly fell upon the Secretary of State himself personally, as an individual practically without any assistance. The Secretary of State had no machinery to enable him to come to a proper decision, and there was no reason whatever why he should have any legal or other qualification. The right hon. Gentleman the present Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) no doubt was an able lawyer, but other holders of the Office might not have the slightest legal qualification for work of this kind, and, in addition to that fact, it must be remembered that a great deal of extra work had been thrown on the Office of the Home Secretary within recent years, rendering the Home Secretary one of the hardest worked Ministers of the Crown. The work of the Home Secretary in Parliament itself had largely increased, so that it came to this—that a special description of duty, which had become more direct and enlarged in its scope, was thrown upon a Minister who might have no special qualification for dealing with it, and who, besides, was one of the hardest worked Ministers in the Cabinet. He (Mr. Hanbury) did not intend to touch upon the subject of criminal appeal generally, as no doubt if he did, he should be ruled out of Order by the Chairman; and, further, the subject was too large a one for him as a layman to deal with. It was, however, possible for an ordinary layman as a looker on to see that the Home Office in some of those cases where appeals were made to the Royal clemency arrived at decisions which, he ventured to say, were not in accordance with common sense. He was not going to base his remarks to-night upon mere theory, because his attention had been called to this matter by some recent decisions of the Home Office, and because one of these cases he considered a matter of urgency, and one which should be brought before the notice of the House without any further delay. What had tempted him to take up this question had been the case of the convict Bowles. This man had been convicted by a jury of murder, and he ventured to say if the murder for which Bowles was tried was actually committed, it was as bad a murder as any man ever perpetrated; and if Bowles were guilty, he ought undoubtedly to have been hanged. It was one of these cases in which, so far as the accused was concerned, there was no third course open. Either the man was guilty of a most ferocious murder—in which case it would have been criminal not to have hanged him—or he was innocent, and ought to have been let off scot-free. But what had happened? Why, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary in this case seemed to have split the difference, and to have made a compromise between the innocence and the guilt of the unfortunate man, whose sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. That, he (Mr. Hanbury) contended was a most illogical course for the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to have pursued. As he (Mr. Hanbury) had said, either the man was guilty and ought to have been hanged, or he was innocent and ought to have been let off. And the course pursued by the right hon. Gentleman was all the more remarkable, as there were two cases under his eye which should have taught him that to sentence a man to penal servitude under such circumstances was a most serious matter. Two men named Beesley and Rice had within the past few months been released after serving 15 years' penal servitude. Why had these men been let loose? Their original sentence had been commuted to one of penal servitude for life, and why had they not been allowed to serve out the sentence? Was it that there had been fresh evidence forthcoming to prove their innocence? He did not think anything of the kind had happened, and he held, in regard to these two cases, that either great injustice had been done to the public or great injustice had been done to the prisoners. If these men were guilty of murder the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had no business whatever to let them out of gaol at all at the end of 15, or even 20, years imprisonment, for we could not afford to have murderers let loose upon society. Evidently, then, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary felt that these men were innocent, and the result was that, having undergone 15 years' penal servitude, they have been let out as innocent, because it was impossible to suppose that the right hon. Gentleman would have let out guilty men. Such a thing would have been an act of lunacy; therefore it must be assumed that the right hon. Gentleman was convinced of the innocence of these men. He (Mr. Hanbury) said then, with these facts before his eyes, and feeling that Beesley and Rice had suffered 15 years' penal servitude in respect of a crime of which they were innocent, it was a very strange course of procedure to send this man Bowles to the very same kind of penal servitude which he knew Beesley and Rice had innocently endured for the long period of 15 years. Some people said that they did not want a Court of Appeal or any appeal at all in these cases. He did not wish, however, to discuss theories, but to look at facts, and the facts in the cases to which he referred, as they could judge from the conduct of the Home Office, went exactly the other way. The fact was, in the first place, that it was very often necessary to review cases of this kind; and, in the second place, it was clear, from the practice of the Home Office, that it was not merely a question of remitting sentences or pardoning prisoners, but a question as to the fact of the guilt or innocence of the prisoners—a question of trying them over again. There was a third fact equally apparent, and it was that the Home Office, either in theory or practice, was about the worst Court of Appeal they could institute in cases of this kind—and he called it a Court, although it only consisted of one man. How did the Home Secretary and the Home Office come to consider cases of this kind at all? It came under cover of the Royal Prerogative of mercy or pardon. No one wanted—he certainly did not—to limit the Prerogative of the Crown in its dispensation of mercy one iota; and he maintained that if we had a Court of Appeal in criminal cases that Prerogative would remain untouched, and would be just as large as it was at present. But he wished to call attention to this fact, that so far—certainly up to recent years—the Prerogative of the

Crown was a Prerogative of pardon, and of pardon which extended itself either to remitting sentences altogether or remitting them partially. But the Prerogative of the Crown, as he understood, in such cases, was exceedingly limited. For instance, it was not possible for the Crown to give anything like the Scotch verdict of "Not proven"; because if the Crown once granted its pardon, however guilty the man might afterwards be proved to be, there was no possibly of his being again tried for the same offence. It was impossible for the Crown to look upon a man as innocent; it merely pardoned him. This was hard on an innocent man, for, if the Home Secretary really believed that a man was innocent, that man ought to be able to go back to his home without a stain on his character, and not simply as a merely pardoned man. Formerly this pardon—as he had said—was a real pardon. It was limited chiefly to the cases of political offenders, and it was afterwards extended to the cases of persons who were sentenced to barbarous punishments which were not approved of by public opinion. The Crown in the exercise of its Prerogative mitigated and made milder these sentences; but at the present moment the Prerogative of the Crown was exercised by the re-trial of the guilt or innocence of a prisoner. This he held to be a very momentous difference. Everyone could see that a great change had taken place in the way the Prerogative of the Crown was exercised, and as to the class of cases to which it applied, and without questioning the right of the Crown in any way as to the exercise of its Prerogative, he submitted that such exercise of Prerogative was open to these three remarks. In the first place by re-trying prisoners, the Crown superseded the functions of its own appointed Courts, and this was entirely contrary to the theory of pardon which was the basis of the Prerogative. In the next place this exercise of the Prerogative was entirely inadequate, because it was not sufficient merely to pardon a man who was innocent—there ought to be a Court to decide that a man was an innocent man and not merely a pardoned man. He (Mr. Hanbury) mentioned that the plain facts as to these cases was that the Home Office did actually re-try the question of the guilt or innocence of the prisoners. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary could deny that. Let them take the case of Bowles for instance. Was there any ground upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary could have given his decision, except upon the question of Bowles' guilt or innocence? Everyone admitted that the murder for which that man was tried was a most atrocious murder, and there was no other issue than that he was either guilty or innocent — there was no possibility of any other questions arising. He (Mr. Hanbury) would go further, and say that if they once admitted that there ought to be a re-trial in such a case, it ought to be a re-trial by a Judge in open Court—a full and complete inquiry with the ordinary apparatus of judicial proceedings, and not a hole-and-corner secret inquiry at the Home Office. What was the present position? How were such cases dealt with by the Home Office at the present moment? At present the appeal to the Home Office was a haphazard affair. It was a question almost of accident whether a case came before the Home Secretary at all, the circumstances very often depending on the activity and perseverance of the prisoner's counsel. If there was to be a re-trial, it should be by a duly qualified Judge, and not by a Home Secretary, who might be a layman, and who was always an overworked official. The prisoner, if he were to be re-tried, had a right to re-trial in open Court; and the hole-and-corner way in which capital sentences were now reviewed at the Home Office was a disgrace to English justice. If a man had a right to re-trial at all, he had a right to re-trial before a jury of his peers, and in a Court in which he could know what was going on, and could have counsel present capable of dealing with all the facts of the case. He (Mr. Hanbury) would go even a trifle farther, and say that whether a re-trial took place in the Home Office or in a regularly constituted Court, at any rate the ordinary principles of justice which were acted upon in open Court ought to be most rigidly observed. It ought not to be in the power of the Home Secretary or anyone else to keep a prisoner in gaol merely on the chance of further evidence turning up as to his guilt or innocence.

Yet, when he had questioned the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary on this point, he had told him that penal servitude was not an irrevocable sentence, and that evidence might turn up to prove a man's innocence. But that was not an answer—that was not the spirit in which this matter ought to be dealt with. It was contrary to the principles of English law that a man should be kept in gaol on the chance of evidence to prove his innocence turning up. No prisoner ought to be kept in confinement unless his guilt were thoroughly established; indeed, in this, as in other cases, the prisoner was entitled to the benefit of the doubt. Clearly there had been in the case he (Mr. Hanbury) had referred to a doubt in the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary's mind; and he contended that the prisoner should have had the benefit of it. The prisoner was entitled to a plain "Yes" or "No," as was a prisoner in open Court, none of our Courts recognizing compromises——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is perfectly entitled to criticize the action of the Home Secretary in advising the Crown in the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy; but he is entering into an examination of the extent of the limits of that Prerogative, which is outside the scope of this Motion. He is discussing the question of the re-trial of prisoners.

MR. HANBURY said, he was pointing out that he was not so sure that it was within the Prerogative of the Crown to come to such a decision as the Home Secretary came to on the occasion to which he had referred.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would be entitled to question the action of the Home Secretary, but not those principles which are independent of the action of a particular Home Secretary.

MR. HANBURY said, he desired to criticize the conduct of the Home Secretary in not coming to a different decision to that which he had arrived at in the case of this man Bowles. He maintained that it was unjust to the man, and contrary to the ordinary principles of justice, not to give a plain "Yes" or "No" in the case. Either the man was guilty or he was innocent. If he was innocent he ought to have been allowed to go free, and if he was guilty he ought, undoubtedly, to have been hanged, and the Home Secretary no more than any ordinary jury had a right to give a decision which was a mere compromise between "Yes" and "No." Further than that, he held that the reason given for commuting the death sentence to one of penal servitude in the case of the convict Bowles would not hold water for a moment. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the sentence was not irrevocable. Well, in theory, no doubt, the sentence of penal servitude for life was irrevocable, but in practice it was not, as was illustrated by the case of Beesley and Rice, these men having had their sentence commuted to penal servitude for life and having been released after 15 years' imprisonment by the right hon. Gentleman the present Home Secretary, who must have had a doubt as to their guilt. It was argued that such sentences as penal servitude for life were lighter than the death penalty, but he very much questioned whether to an innocent man that was so; and where the Home Secretary's decision was delayed to the eleventh hour, it seemed to him (Mr. Hanbury) that the commutation of the death sentence into one of penal servitude was almost an additional sentence. Gaol Chaplain after Gaol Chaplain had written to him complaining of the bad practice which in recent years had grown up on the part of Home Secretaries. Formerly, they said, Home Secretaries used to make up their minds and give their decisions at once; but latterly they had put off their decisions as to the guilt or innocence of prisoners sentenced to death until 24 hours of the time fixed for the executions. In the case of a man like Bowles it was hardly an exaggeration to say that he had already undergone the death penalty, and that the sentence of penal servitude for life, or even for 15 years, was almost an additional sentence to the one of death, which he had already undergone. He had been urged to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to the extreme cruelty of the course of not giving decisions in these cases until the eleventh hour. It was most cruel in the case of the innocent man, and in the case of the guilty man it was just as cruel. In theory, an interval between the delivery of the sentence and the execution was allowed in order to enable the convict to prepare for death; but in cases where an appeal was made to the Home Secretary for the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of mercy, owing to delay in arriving at a decision, the convict did not know whether the death penalty was to be inflicted, and remained in a state of painful uncertainty and unable to prepare himself for death. Here, again, was an evil existing under the present system which would not exist if we had a Court of Criminal Appeal. This uncertainty, he was told, had a most painful effect upon the criminal classes themselves. The Chaplain of the Gaol in the county of which he knew most—namely, the County of Stafford—had written to him telling him that during the time he had held the office of Chaplain of the Gaol, out of 14 men sentenced to death only two had had their sentences carried out, and that the undoubted effect upon the criminal classes of the uncertainty attaching to these sentences, and the knowledge that the chances were that they would not be carried out, was to produce a most painful feeling. It was certain that a great deal of uncertainty must arise under the present system of retrial, on which so much depended on the character and on the political views and the general views on such a subject as capital punishment of a particular Minister for the time being. If we had, instead of a single administrative official, an ordinary Court to deal with these cases, the proceedings would be a good deal more regular, and there would be a much greater certainty of punishment following crime—and it was that certainty of punishment much more than the stringency of it which had so great a deterrent effect on the criminal classes. And there were other reasons why the appeal in capital cases should be much more real than it was. If the present system was to continue, something at any rate ought to be done to strengthen the hands of the Home Secretary. He (Mr. Hanbury) did not refer so much to the right hon. Gentleman the present Home Secretary, who was an eminent lawyer, but it was necessary to provide for cases where the Home Secretary was not a lawyer at all, and in dealing with this point he wished not to touch upon the question of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal. They must remember that this appeal was an appeal which touched the social system at its two extreme ends. It touched the rights and the Prerogative of the Crown on the one hand and the rights of the poorest and most ignorant subjects of Her Majesty on the other. Already English law told too much in favour of the guilty at the present moment, and he was heartily glad that changes were about to be introduced which at the other end of the scale would make it more difficult for the guilty to be acquitted than it was at present. But he must say that at the other end of the scale they wanted something to protect the innocent prisoner. The system pursued by the present Home Secretary of deciding neither the one way nor the other until the last moment, was one which told very greatly against the innocent man. And then, again, in the present state of English law, when they had appeal after appeal allowed in cases affecting property, with which the rich were principally concerned, they ought to be very careful indeed that the only appeal which was left to the poor man, namely, an appeal in regard to that which was dearer to him than any property, that was to say his person or his life, was a real and genuine appeal, giving him every opportunity of having justice done to him. But, as a matter of fact, the poor man, in capital cases, had no right of appeal at all; and then, when an appeal was granted, he had no opportunity of making himself heard by counsel before the Court, the appeal being heard in a hole-and-corner manner. It would be better if the decision of the Judge and jury were final, than that a prisoner should be exposed to all the uncertainty which attached to the review of that decision in the Home Office. He (Mr. Hanbury) held that by the present system they weakened the responsibility of jurors, who always knew that there was a possibility of their verdicts being reviewed. In the next place they increased the uncertainty of punishment because of the particular idiosyncrasies of Home Secretaries and the constant changes which took place in the Office of Home Secretary; and, finally, they weakened the adminstration of justice by lessening the respect in which justice ought to be regarded among the criminal classes. He would repeat what he had said at the beginning, that his attention had been called to the exercise of the Royal Prerogative chiefly by the way in which that Prerogative had been exercised in the case of the convict Bowles; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary—looking at the cases to which reference had been made, the cases of Beesley and Rice, who had been released from penal servitude only within the past few months—to realize that a sentence of penal servitude for life was almost irrevocable, and that it was most unfair to re-try a prisoner without giving him an opportunity of defending himself or of getting a barrister to defend him. They had some right to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary that he would act on the same principle of justice and administer the same sort of justice as was administered in the ordinary Courts, and that if he had a doubt in his mind he would give the prisoner the benefit of it. By acting in this way the right hon. Gentleman would increase respect for the authority of the law. There was a strong feeling that in the case of Bowles the right hon. Gentleman ought to have made up his mind sooner than he did, and there was some fear that there had been a miscarriage of justice.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he would venture to interpose between the hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) and the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) for a few moments, for two reasons—first, because when he went to the Home Office he held almost precisely the opinion which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hanbury) now entertained; and, secondly, because he was a layman, and with all the disadvantages which the hon. Member had referred to in the course of his remarks. What he (Mr. Childers) wished to say was this—that the experience which he had obtained at the Home Office with reference not only to the 14 cases of capital convictions which came before him during the short time he was there, but, also, with reference to many cases of minor offences and convictions as to which applications to mitigate sentences had come to him, had led him to a very different conclusion from that with which he had originally gone to the Home Office. In the first place, he should like to get rid of one idea which ran through the whole of the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hanbury); and in dealing with this point he did not wish to trespass in the direction which the Chairman had so well pointed out. The function of the Home Secretary, under the present practice, was not to re-try a case. He could not put that too clearly. The Home Secretary was not a Court of Appeal. He was not going to say whether there should or should not be a Court of Appeal, although he was of opinion that even if there were a Court of Appeal the exercise of the Queen's Prerogative would be asked for on behalf of convicted offenders just as much as it was now. The function of the Home Secretary was simply this, when a prisoner had been convicted, to be the medium of the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy. The prisoner under our present law, having once been found guilty of a criminal offence, had no right to a re-trial; and he (Mr. Childers) was not now going into the highly technical question of the Court for Crown Cases Reserved, which did not enter into this debate. The question raised was whether the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy, which, as he had said, they must be perfectly clear from the first was not a re-trial, took place in a judicious and satisfactory manner. If it did not, it ought to be amended; but if no clear case for amendment was shown—and he should discuss the question at no very great length—then he thought the proposition which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hanbury) had placed before them fell to the ground. He wished to deny altogether, at the outset, before he went through the process which the Home Secretary had to follow and the assistance he got, one statement the hon. Member had made, so far, at least, as his (Mr. Childers's) own experience was concerned, and so far as the experience of those who went before him was concerned. As to the experience of the present Home Secretary, of course no one but the right hon. Gentleman himself could speak to that. According to his (Mr. Childers's) experience, it had not been the practice to defer the decison of the Home Secretary until just before the time fixed for the execution of a criminal. In the cases which had come before himself inquiries were made, and the prisoners' friends and the prisoners themselves and the prison officials were informed of the Home Secretary's decision, not just before the sentence was carried out, but as soon as the Home Secretary's mind was made up. He was not speaking for the present Home Secretary, but of what was the case in his time. He wished also to make it clear to the House what the Home Secretary had to rely on in dealing with this most important of all his duties—the duty of exercising the Queen's Prerogative of Mercy. There was nothing which filled him with greater relutance when he was offered the Office of Home Secretary in the late Government than the knowledge that he would have to exercise this power, and that it would depend on him either to mitigate, or not to mitigate, the sentence of prisoners. He had approached the Office with some dread and with a keen sense of responsibility, and almost his first act when he went to the Home Office was to ascertain precisely what the practice in this matter was, and what assistance he should have in dealing with this most important part of his duty. The hon. Member (Mr. Hanbury) appeared to think—in fact, he (Mr. Childers) thought he had used the words—that the Home Secretary had to act upon his own unguided mind in dealing with these matters. But that was not the case. In the first place, the Home Secretary had at the Home Office, and had had for a long time, two permanent Under Secretaries, one of whom was called the Legal Assistant, both of them trained lawyers; secondly, he had the opportunity of obtaining the advice, if he should deem it necessary, of the Law Officers of the Crown; and, thirdly, he had the opportunity of obtaining—as, in one notable case, he (Mr. Childers) had found it necessary to obtain—the assistance of the officer connected with the Treasury—he referred to the Public Prosecutor. The Home Secretary had also, and above all, the benefit of the advice and assistance of the Judge who tried the case, and that advice and assistance was not necessarily obtained only once. He remembered one case which came before him in which the advice of the Judge was taken in writing, and by personal interviews three or four times, before a final decision was arrived at. So far then from its being the case that it was the judgment of a Secretary of State, and an over-worked Secretary of State, upon which the exercise of the Queen's Prerogative depended, and that the Prerogative was likely always to be exercised in a particular way, almost the opposite might be said to be the case. The Home Secretary had the written opinions, the advice, and personal consultation with two distinguished lawyers at the Home Office, the opportunity of appealing to the Law Officers of the Crown—although it was not usual to appeal to them—the advice of the Crown Prosecutor as to certain questions of fact, and, above all, he had the assistance of the Judge. He (Mr. Childers) could say with certainty that, whether or not it would be expedient to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal, he doubted whether any machinery could be invented in an Office, the head of which dispensed the Queen's Prerogative of Mercy, more efficacious than that which now existed. After the experience he had had, he did not see how more valuable machinery could be invented, or how the Prerogative of Mercy could be more satisfactorily exercised. Therefore, he thought that before the House adopted the view of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), they required to hear a great deal more than he had laid before them. The hon. Member must remember that with respect to legal advice of different kinds, and from different quarters, the Home Secretary was armed with advice to such an extent, and of such a character, that he doubted whether any better channel for the exercise of the Royal Prerogative could be discovered. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston seemed to think that there was something haphazard in the action of the Home Secretary. Well, he (Mr. Childers) would not deal with the special case which had been referred to, in which a man who had had the capital sentence passed upon him, had quite recently received a commutation of that sentence to penal servitude for life. He did not know the facts, and it would be rash of him to found any argument upon newspaper reports of them; but he would say this, that if the Secretary of State had to discharge the duty, not of re-trying cases, but of exercising the Royal Prerogative of Mercy, there must be cases in which the evidence as it came before the Home Secretary contained just that element of doubt which would perfectly entitle him to retain the man in prison for life, or for a long period of years, but which would not justify him in saying that that should be done which, once done, could never be undone in respect of that man. No one but the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary could know the circumstances of the case in question, and he (Mr. Childers) could not say whether they ought to be disclosed now. He (Mr. Childers) was perfectly aware that such cases had arisen, and must arise. The hon. Member for Preston had said something about the action of the Home Secretary being illogical. Well, it would be the most illogical thing in the world to tell a person who was to exercise the Queen's Prerogative—"You must either hang the man, or let him out upon the public again." He (Mr. Childers) did not intend, when he rose, to speak at any length, but he desired to put forward in a few words what was the practice of the Home Office, what was the assistance the Home Secretary received in these cases, and what was the result of that assistance. He could certainly say this, that what was done, in the case of the 14 appeals which were made to him whilst he was at the Home Office, was eminently logical. He had to become acquainted with the facts of the trials, the Judges' notes came to him, the reports of the trials themselves were submitted, and every fact in public knowledge which could be obtained was carefully collected. Then the Judge himself was consulted both by written communications and orally. A most careful report, prepared by the two lawyers in the Home Office, was then considered, and in some cases it was thought desirable to seek assistance from the outside. These proceedings, which were by no means casual, but each had been built up gradually by successive Secretaries of State—certainly this had been so during the whole of the Queen's Reign—seemed to him to be satisfactory, and he did not think that the present moment was a time at which to alter the existing arrangements. Therefore, while he was no optimist, and did not believe a thing to be good merely because he happened to have found it in existence, he concluded by saying that it would be for the hon. Gentleman opposite, and for those who agreed with him, to point out distinct blots and flaws and to propose for them categorical remedies before the Committee adopted the views he had expressed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he felt some difficulty in following the hon. Member who had introduced this subject, through his extremely interesting speech, and through the legal topics he had raised, as he (Mr. Matthews) gathered from the ruling of the Chairman that he should be out of Order in discussing the question of a Court of Appeal as compared with the exercise of the Queen's Prerogative of Mercy. He confined himself to the personal criticism—of which he by no means complained—contained in the speech of the hon. Member. To start with, however, he should like to endorse what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers)—namely, that the idea that the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy amounted in any way to a re-trial was contrary to the whole spirit of the law in criminal cases. The only effect of constituting a Court of Criminal Appeal would be that a new trial would take place before a fresh jury, a new trial would begin *de novo*, as if there had never been a previous trial, and if a new trial were granted in the case of a conviction, it must also be granted in the case of an acquittal, and he did not know how that could possibly be of benefit to prisoner. With regard to the advice given to the Crown in a capital case as to the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy, it was not in any sense a re-trial. In his own opinion, it was somewhat an abuse of the existing system which had sprung up in recent years that cast upon the Home Secretary the necessity of considering new matters of facts which had not been before the jury, these matters coming up for consideration not through the action of the Home Office, but through the action of outsiders, who, feeling sympathy with the man whose life was forfeited to the law, cast about for new facts to press them upon the attention of the Home Secretary—facts not proved upon oath or sifted by the valuable tests of open inquiry in Court. Was it possible for the Home Secretary altogether to shut his eyes to these various facts, and to refuse to consider them? The Home Secretary was placed in a position of extreme difficulty and delicacy. He agreed that the Home Office was not a satisfactory tribunal to ascertain new facts with regard to a case, but did the hon. Member for Preston suggest that a really new fact undiscovered at the trial, and coming to the knowledge of the Home Secretary afterwards, was to be disregarded, and the man hanged in spite of it? The hon. Member would hardly suggest that. Once they let in the principle that there was to be a new trial before a jury because a new fact had been discovered supporting the theory of innocence, would anyone say that they could refuse a new trial when a new fact had been discovered supporting the theory of guilt? Now, in the case in question there was a man with whom were living his wife and her son. [An hon. MEMBER: His son.] No, a wife and her son. At night the woman and the boy died, undoubtedly by poison. The *post mortem* examination proved that conclusively, and the doctor had no doubt of it. The jury found the man guilty. He and the learned Judge who tried the case went over every line of the evidence given at the trial, and also over the depositions given before the magistrates and the coroner, and they both came to the conclusion that it was impossible to say that the verdict of the jury was wrong. It was quite true that the evidence before the jury did not trace any of the poison to the prisoner, he was not shown to have become possessed of strychnine within any reasonable period before the lamentable occurrence, and another blot in the evidence was that no adequate motive for the murder was shown. On the other hand, the only possible theory of the prisoner's innocence was that the unhappy woman who died committed suicide and murder. As he had said, neither he nor the learned Judge could say that the verdict was wrong; but, at the same time, it was clear from the facts before the jury that there were gaps, so to speak, in the evidence, and that there was a possibility of its turning out some day that the woman had procured strychnine, and taken it herself and given it to her son. There was also the possibility of its being shown that the man had obtained strychnine. There was a most material fact which was not covered by the evidence at the trial, and which, according to the way it turned out, might show that the verdict was absolutely right' or absolutely wrong. Was it possible, under the circumstances, to give that simple "Yea" or "Nay" which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hanbury) said he (Mr. Matthews) was bound to give? It was impossible for him to say that the man was innocent, and that, therefore, he ought to be allowed to go free; and, on the other hand, he did not feel justified in sending the man to execution. He therefore, thought—and the learned Judge agreed with him—that the man should be subjected to the next severest punishment known to the law, but which was not irrevocable, and would allow of his being set at liberty if his innocence should afterwards come to light. He agreed that that was an illogical proceeding; but the Prerogative of Mercy was full of illogical consequences. Thousands of considerations that were illogical were constantly allowed to prevail in the exercise of the Royal Prerogative. Let him take, for instance, a case which excited great interest last year—the case of Miriam Jones, who murdered her child. She was a girl who had been seduced at the age of 14, abandoned by her seducer, and left to poverty and want. Her case, when she tried to get rid of her shame and the consequence of her own distress, caused most poignant sympathy throughout the whole of the Principality of Wales. They might say it was illogical to give countenance to that kind of public sympathy; but he apprehended that, illogical as it might have been to exercise the Prerogative of Mercy, to minimize the girl's punishment, and to award the lightest punishment the circumstances admitted of, it was a proper case in which to exercise the Prerogative of Mercy. The hon. Member (Mr. Hanbury) had criticized his (Mr. Matthews') action in the case of Beesley and Rice. If the hon. Member had told him he would have referred to that case, he (Mr. Matthews) would have refreshed his memory. The hon. Member said he (Mr. Matthews) released those men, because he must have known them to be innocent. The hon. Member was quite mistaken. The two men, with others, had got into a riot and fight outside a public-house in Leeds, in which fight a man met with his death, Beesley and Rice were participators in the fight, which resulted in the publican's death. Altogether five men were convicted—two of them were hanged, and the other three had their sentences commuted to penal servitude for life. Although technically and legally guilty of murder, yet the part these men played in the attack upon the publican was slight. They were not the actual inflictors of the wounds and violence which led to the man's death, and he (Mr. Matthews) felt when he released Beesley and Rice that their sentences had lasted long enough for the ends of justice; and, with the full concurrence of the learned Judge who tried them, he allowed the men to be released. They were young men, not otherwise of bad character, and they acted in the heat of blood. There was a sort of partizan feeling actuating them—he was not sure if there was not some feeling of race. Certainly he knew there were circumstances of that sort in the case which considerably mitigated the character of their offence. They had less of the guilt of the man's death upon them than those who were executed. They had not inflicted the actual blows which caused his death, and he thought that, after 15 or 18 years' imprisonment, he might, with the sanction of the learned Judge, allow the men to return to what he believed, from all he could learn of their circumstances and history, to be an honest course of life. The men had conducted themselves well in prison, and the proper discipline of prisons required that they should hold out to prisoners the hope of an alleviation of their sentences if their conduct was perfectly good and satisfactory while they were in prison. If they were to preclude the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy in such cases, they would find it very much more difficult to maintain discipline in prisons. Again there were cases in which prisoners, in consequence of extraordinary good conduct, such a thing as saving a warder from murder and attack by another prisoner, were very justly forgiven the remainder of their sentences. These were perfectly illogical cases too. The hon. Member would have a man hanged, so that there should be no possibility of his release, if he were found guilty of murder, but, illogical as it seemed, there were cases of murder in which it was proper that the Prerogative of Mercy should be exercised. There might be cases in which there had been some mistake in law. He could hardly fancy any tribunal which was more abundantly assisted by the best legal advice than the Home Secretary. He had never dealt, not only with capital sentences but with cases of any gravity, without consulting either by writing or by word of mouth the Judge who tried the case. In some cases he had called in the assistance of the Law Officers. A case occurred the other day in which, on a point of law, he was advised by the Law Officers to pardon a man sentenced to death. The Lord Chancellor was always ready to assist him, and he never knew a Judge refuse to come in, in a case in which he had not been connected, in order to give his advice to the Home Secretary. In one case in which his Predecessor refused to interfere with the verdict, but which had been again pressed upon the attention of the Government, he had solicited the services of the Master of the Rolls, and had asked him if he would meet him (Mr. Matthews) and the Judge who tried the case, in order to review the case. As far as legal advice went he believed the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy was abundantly well guarded. The most painful, and upon the whole most unsatisfactory proceeding, was when new facts were pressed upon the attention of the Home Secretary as a reason for the exercise of the Prerogative. The Lipski case brought that home to his mind most forcibly. The disadvantage under which he tried in that case to grope his way through a variety of new facts which were presented to him and alleged to be true, was certainly most embarrassing; but he believed that unless they took away the Prerogative of Mercy altogether, he did not know how any Adviser of Her Majesty could refuse to listen to cases of that sort. For his part, the principle upon which he had gone, had been not to listen, but to refuse to listen, to allegations which were contradicted by sworn testimony at the trial, and to listen with great reluctance, and an unwilling mind to any statements of fact that might have been proved at the trial, but were not, and only to lend a willing ear to matters that had *bonâ fide* come to light since the trial. It might always happen that some fact was not known at the time the trial took place, which had been since discovered, and had a very material and important bearing on the result of the trial, and which ought not to be overlooked. He did not know whether the explanation he had given to the hon. Member (Mr. Hanbury) was satisfactory to him; but he frankly surrendered his own action to the severe criticism of the hon. Member in the confidence that, though there was always a possibility of error, he had used every means in his power to ensure the right and proper exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy. He certainly thought it was a safe course to take, if there was any reasonable and substantial ground, although illogical ground, for not putting the prisoner beyond the reach of any further mercy, to substitute for the punishment of death the punishment of penal servitude for life, which could be revoked and put an end to if the prisoner proved to be innocent. The hon. Member (Mr. Hanbury) must not suppose for a moment that the advice he (Mr. Matthews) gave to Her Majesty to spare this man's life was tendered because he supposed the man was innocent. On the contrary, he relied on the material before the jury, and on the jury not being wrong. The materials before them were not so complete as to shut out the possibility of the man being innocent, and, therefore, in order to afford an opportunity of a mistake being rectified, he asked Her Majesty to substitute the sentence of penal servitude for life for the irrevocable sentence of death.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had stated the facts of the Bowles case with accuracy; but he had omitted one incident which seemed to him (Mr. Pickersgill) relevant, and which he thought should have been stated. The right hon. Gentleman said very accurately that the jury brought in a verdict of guilty. They did; but, at 9 o'clock in the evening, they came into Court, the Judge was re-called, and the jury informed his Lordship that there was no chance of their agreeing, and they intimated that they were about equally divided. The learned Judge addressed them, and told them, in language as plain as it was decent for him to use, to acquit the prisoner. They then left the Court, and an hour afterwards returned and brought in a verdict of guilty. It was obvious that the Judge was perfectly astounded at the result, because he was so overpowered that it was some minutes before he could speak. He (Mr. Pickersgill) was as jealous as any man of the interference of any Government with the verdict of a jury; but he thought that a jury which came into Court at 9 o'clock and said they were hopelessly divided, and then at 10 o'clock brought in a verdict of guilty, had by their conduct discredited themselves, and that, therefore, the Home Secretary might with less hesitation have superseded or over-ruled the decision at which they had arrived. So much with regard to that case. He should be unwilling that this Vote, which included the salary of the Home Secretary, should be passed by the Committee without some criticism from the quarter of the House in which he sat of the right hon. Gentleman's conduct on other grounds. The Home Secretary, of all the Ministers of the Queen, occupied a peculiar position towards the citizens of this country. Their relation was very intimate; one might perhaps almost say it was a kind of domestic relation. It was extremely important they should have as the occupant of the Home Secretaryship a Gentleman who was ready to lend an attentive ear to substantial grievances. But if that was the position which the Home Secretary occupied towards the community at large, the relation was peculiarly marked so far as the citizens of London in particular were concerned. It was so in many particulars, and especially so in one to which he wished now mainly to refer, one which concerned, or might concern, the daily life of all of them, and especially of those who belonged to what were called the humbler classes of society. The difference arose from the circumstance that in other towns the ratepayers, through their Representatives, had the control of their police, whereas the ratepayers of London had not control of the police. The head of the police force was in this House, and whereas the citizens of Manchester and Birmingham might, if they had grievances against the police, approach the members of the Watch Committee and have the matter investigated, the only resource for the citizens of London, when they had grievances against the police, was to bring those grievances to the knowledge of the Home Secretary through Members of the House of Commons. He was not going to blame the Home Secretary upon this occasion for refusing to inquire into anything which occurred on the 13th of November. It would be unfair to saddle the Home Secretary with any special responsibility for refusing inquiry with regard to anything which occurred on that day, because, as he (Mr. Pickersgill) very much regretted, the House had covered the right hon. Gentleman's conduct and had declined to authorize an inquiry. But the vote of the House was strictly limited to the events of the 13th of November, and he challenged respectfully the attitude which the Home Secretary had taken up towards grievances which had been brought to his knowledge relating to other dates. A little while ago he brought to the knowledge of the Home Secretary the fact that a young man, proceeding along Holborn on the 20th of November, was seriously assaulted by the police. How did the Home Secretary meet him? The right hon. Gentleman said that if the complainant would tell his story to a magistrate, or to the Chief Commissioner of Police, and not through him (Mr. Pickersgill), the matter would receive attention. The reply was scarcely so courteous as the right hon. Gentleman no doubt intended it to be, but that matter, perhaps, was a small one. He submitted that the Home Secretary, in making a reply of that kind, was quite overlooking the Constitutional rights and privileges both of a citizen outside the House and a Member of the House. As he understood it, there was no right, no privilege, more ancient, more well established, than that if a citizen had a grievance against a servant of the Government he should bring that grievance to the knowledge of the Government through a Member of the House of Commons, and that especially that was the case where, as in the case which he brought to the right hon. Gentleman's notice, a citizen could not have resource to the ordinary remedy of the Law Courts, because, owing to unavoidable circumstances, he was not able to identify the particular person who assaulted him, although there could be no doubt he had been assaulted. There were other cases which were brought to the right hon. Gentleman's notice, with regard to alleged assaults upon prisoners whilst in custody. So far as they knew, nothing was done in consequence of the complaints, and he submitted that the attitude assumed by the right hon. Gentleman was extremely unsatisfactory. What was the result? He saw that yesterday, at one of the Metropolitan Police Courts, a charge of a most serious character against the police was endorsed by one of the Metropolitan Magistrates. What did that Magistrate say upon the very question which was brought to the right hon. Gentleman's notice—namely, that in frequent cases—he (Mr. Pickersgill) hoped that they were not habitual —it had become the practice of the Metropolitan Police to assault persons whilst in custody? The right hon. Gentleman declined to do anything in regard to the complaints which were made, and what was the result? They found that yesterday, at the Wandsworth Police Court, the Magistrate declared that a policeman in plain clothes struck a prisoner, whilst in the station, on the back of the head. The Inspector positively swore that no assault was committed. The learned Magistrate continued, "I am bound to say I do not believe the Inspector's evidence. I am very sorry, indeed, to have to say so, but I do not believe it all the same." The Magistrate came to the conclusion that the man was injured by someone while in the station, and he concluded, "I consider the whole conduct of the police, of all concerned, from the highest to the lowest, eminently unsatisfactory, and it must be inquired into." These were the words of a Magistrate who was as little likely as any man upon the Bench to use language of that description unless the thing was well founded. They were the words of Mr. Montagu Williams, a keen man of the world, as well as a most experienced criminal lawyer. Mr. Montagu Williams had set a good example to some of his colleagues by bringing to the judgment seat neither prejudices nor prepossessions. They had the complaints which had been made in the House of Commons endorsed by a magistrate, speaking with all the responsibility of his judicial office. But there was another matter, perhaps a more significant matter than the fact that these constables had misconducted themselves, because it threw some light upon the general practice and regulations of the Metropolitan Police, which he submitted were most inimical to the liberties of the citizens of this City. How did Mr. Montagu Williams endorse the charge sheet? Why, "I consider the conduct of 200W, 496W, 574W, and 431M, (156W on the last occasion, having since been been removed to Southwark) and Inspector Spencer, unsatisfactory and their evidence unreliable." What did that show? It showed that whilst this charge, a charge of a most serious character, was hanging over the head of this constable, he was removed from the districts in which he had been serving, to another district, and not only so, but instead of remaining 156W he became 431M.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order. I do not see how that is connected with the action of the Home Secretary. The hon. Gentleman's remarks must be directed to the action of the Home Secretary.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, that, of course, he should submit most willingly and cheerfully to the Chairman's ruling, but he would ask if he might indicate how he connected his remarks with the action of the Home Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman was the head of the Metropolitan Police, and he (Mr. Pickersgill) was pointing out that there was a rule or a practice of the Metropolitan Police, which, in his judgment, was very injurious to the public.

The CHAIRMAN: A general statement of that kind could be entered into on the Police Vote, but on this Vote hon. Members must deal with the specific action of the Home Secretary.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he would content himself with having brought these facts to the knowledge of the Home Secretary, and with asking the right hon. Gentleman what he proposed to do in the matter. Mr. Montagu Williams said that inquiry must be made. Of what nature was that inquiry going to be? He asserted distinctly that an inquiry by Sir Charles Warren would be a pure farce. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] With all respect to hon. Gentlemen opposite, he asserted that in the opinion of, at all events, a very large proportion of the citizens of London, a portion of whom he had the honour to represent, a private departmental inquiry by Sir Charles Warren, such as that which took place lately in the case of Constable Bloy, would be a pure and unadulterated farce. The only inquiry which would satisfy the public mind would be a thorough and open and public inquiry, and he should be glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman what course he proposed to take in these very grave circumstances?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that he never meant to be discourteous to him. On the occasion to which reference had been made, the hon. Gentleman mentioned the case of a young man unknown, who had been attacked by a policeman unknown.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, that he mentioned both the name and the address of the young man, and he would give them to the right hon. Gentleman now if he desired it.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that the policeman's name was certainly never mentioned. The hon. Gentleman asked him if he would direct an inquiry, but he could only direct an inquiry which, in the opinion of the hon. Member and those who sat with him, was unsatisfactory and inconclusive. He must decline to institute fishing inquiries of the sort indicated before he knew what were the facts with which he had to deal. If any definite case of misconduct was brought against a policeman, and it assumed a criminal complexion, he would, as he had already said to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) send it before a magistrate, but if it was a mere breach of discipline, a mere breach of duty by a policeman, the proper course was to send the case before the First Commissioner of Police, who was the only tribunal competent to deal with it. He could not institute fanciful inquiries—the law did not admit of it—simply because the hon. Member chose to suggest that there had been some misconduct by a policeman unknown. With regard to the case reported to-day, he would tell the hon. Member what he had done. Before this afternoon, the constables implicated in the censure of Mr. Montagu Williams were suspended. He had applied to Mr. Montagu Williams for his notes, and as soon as he got the notes and a copy of the evidence, he would look into them. He had, however, already directed that the matter should go to the Director of Public Prosecutions, and that being so, he thought the hon. Member would feel it would not be right or proper for him to make further allusion to it.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, that if any justification were needed for the speech of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) it was to be found in the two addresses which followed it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) admitted that the function of advising Her Majesty as to the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy was undoubtedly the most important of all the duties appertaining to the office of Home Secretary. That carried out the contention the hon. Member for Preston put so clearly before the Committee, for it proved that the judicial portion of the office was far more important than the administrative portion. The Home Secretary himself told them that there was no question of re-trial in any sense, and that it was an abuse of right to press on the Home Secretary any new matter. The right hon. Gentleman further said —"I agree it is a bad tribunal to re-try a case," but he virtually went on to give them reasons why he had re-tried the case brought before them by the hon. Member for Preston. The Home Secretary also said one blot in the evidence was that no adequate motive had been shown for the murder. How could a case for re-trial be put more clearly? The right hon. Gentleman further admitted that there were gaps in the evidence, and that a material fact was uncovered. That led up to another very important remark of the Home Secretary—namely, that he agreed that the Home Secretary did form a bad tribunal to re-try a case. Speaking of the two men whom he had liberated, the Home Secretary said that was a peculiar case; he added that considerations of partizanship entered into the attack upon the publican, and that otherwise Beesley and Rice were not of bad character. Surely, an administrative officer holding a seat in the House as a partizan could not be the best tribunal to re-try these most serious cases, because, in the eyes of the country, there were virtually re-trials. It certainly seemed to him that the case against the present system had been very fully made out.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he thought that the most interesting part of the discussion that evening was not so much the speech of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) as the two speeches which followed, one from the ex-Home Secretary and one from the present Home Secretary. Certain statements were made by those right hon. Gentlemen which were of a most interesting character, and which must cause all thinking men to consider not only whether the Home Secretary was a proper person to decide the awful question as to whether a man should be sent to execution or not, but whether they were prepared to continue the present system of condemning men to capital punishment. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) had said he respited the man Bowles not because he believed him to be innocent, but because he thought there was a possibility of its being shown that the verdict of the jury was wrong.

Mr. MATTHEWS: Not because I believed the jury were wrong in drawing the inference that the man was guilty, but because the facts were not complete, and a new fact might turn up to show that the verdict was wrong.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, that another statement of the right hon. Gentleman was perhaps still more significant; it was that he believed it might be positively the duty of the Home Secretary, whilst he was convinced there was still a possibility of evidence being forthcoming which might show that a man was not guilty, to send the man to execution. That was a fearful state of affairs, and it ought not to be allowed to exist. This country stood alone almost amongst the civilized States of the world in maintaining such a system. The discussion to-night showed that the present system for dispensing the Prerogative of Mercy was exceedingly unsatisfactory, and he believed what had been said would tend to greatly ripen public opinion upon the subject.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said, that notwithstanding all that had been put forward against the present plan, it was impossible to suppose that any other tribunal would do away altogether with the need of the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy by the Crown through the Home Office. There was a recent case that proved that a man named Habron was tried at Manchester a few years ago for murder. He was found guilty. The circumstantial evidence was so clear and strong that there was no general doubt in the public mind that the man was guilty. There was no recommendation to mercy; because if the man were guilty the murder was a very bad one indeed. Habron was respited, but it was never made public why he was respited; he (Mr. Provand) believed it was because the Judge who tried the case had some doubt as to his guilt. Within a year the notorious Peace was arrested, and confessed to the murder for which Habron had been sentenced to death, and Habron was set at liberty. That case could not have been met by any Appeal Court for criminal cases. The Home Secretary had stated, and no doubt it was quite true, that the action in connection with the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy in capital and other cases must always be more or less illogical. The inquiry which took place at the Home Office never could be the same as a new trial, as circumstances and probabilities were taken into account that could not be considered at a regular trial. On the other hand, he (Mr. Provand) was certain the Prerogative was never exercised on the opinion of the Home Secretary alone, and only after conference with at least the Judge who tried the case and the Law Officers of the Crown, which gave security that no point in favour of any prisoner would be overlooked.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he noticed there was a charge of £4,000 for the inspection of explosives. Salaries were provided for no less than three Military Inspectors, but he could find nothing in the Vote showing that the Board of Trade dealt with the question at all. As the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had been badgered enough by hon. Gentlemen opposite, he would ask the Under Secretary (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) to say whether it was the duty of any one of the three Inspectors to see that merchant vessels receiving as part of their cargo dynamite, gunpowder, or guncotton were properly fitted for the conveyance of such explosives. He also desired to know whether proper precautions were taken by vessels which shipped and transported petroleum, and whether, in the case of vessels carrying cargoes of coals, it was the duty of anybody to see that the holds of such vessels were properly ventilated, so that coal gas could not accumulate. If the hon. Gentleman assured him that one of the Inspectors was told off for the duty he had specified, he should submit it was a public scandal that not one of the three Inspectors was a naval man who knew something about ships.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, that the duties in which the hon. and gallant Gentleman was interested were laid down by virtue of Section 34 of the Explosives Act, 1875, upon Harbour Authorities who, with the sanction of the Board of Trade, made bye-laws regulating the loading, unloading, storage, and conveyance of explosives. There was also a power of searching ships under section 73. He was not aware that there was any particular system of apportioning duty amongst the three Inspectors of explosives. They were all very valuable public servants, and he had no doubt that the Board of Trade could, whenever necessary, resort to them for advice.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he did not think it would be quite fair to the Home Secretary to raise again the question which was debated at considerable length a short short time ago—namely, his action with reference to the meetings in Trafalgar Square, and he did not propose to do so. He listened very carefully to the speeches the right hon. Gentleman made upon the question, and, if he might say so, they were very able from the right hon. Gentleman's point of view. What he wished, however, to call attention to was the statement made in the course of the debate to which the right hon. Gentleman indicated his assent across the Table. The main defence for the prohibition of the meeting in Trafalgar Square was the disorderly character of certain meetings which had taken place about the time or immediately before the 13th November. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was not going to say whether the right hon. Gentleman did or did not make out a satisfactory defence; but he thought this was a fair summary of his case—namely, that while public meetings could be held under proper circumstances, and under proper authority at certain times, there was a certain condition of affairs at that time which made the meetings undesirable. [Mr. MATTHEWS indicated dissent.] He did not know whether he was very lucid in his attempt to summarize the right hon. Gentleman's contention. Perhaps he might sum up the right hon. Gentleman's view by saying that while he did not object to meetings in general in Trafalgar Square, he did object to them at that particular season and under the particular circumstances of the time. The right hon. Gentleman would remember that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was speaking, and was making one of the strongest speeches made in the debate in favour of the action of the Government The right hon. and learned Gentleman replied to a question put by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney asked how many public places were now left in London for meeting, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury replied—"That there were just as many places now as there were before the 13th of November;" and he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) remembered very distinctly the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary said "Hear, hear!" across the Table of the House to that statement. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury went on to say under what circumstances, in his opinion, meetings would be allowed in Trafalgar Square. The requirements he laid down were that the meetings should be called for a legal and proper purpose, and called by responsible persons. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) held that the meeting called for the 13th of November was called for a legal and legitimate purpose, and was called by a perfectly responsible body—namely, the Federation of Radical Clubs in London, which had previously conducted many public meetings in Trafalgar Square, and always done so in a most orderly manner. The question he wanted to put to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) was whether he did not consider that the exceptional state of things, which, in his opinion, justified him in prohibiting meetings in Trafalgar Square, had not passed away, and whether it was not now his duty, for the purpose of maintaining good relations between the authorities and the people of London, to remove the prohibition, and to order that there should be no interference with any responsible body which wished to hold meetings in Trafalgar Square for legal and legitimate purposes?

MR. MATTHEWS said, that he was unable to assent to the version the hon. Member gave of the remarks he (Mr. Matthews) addressed to the House on the occasion of the debate upon the Motion relating to the Trafalgar Square meetings. The proposition which he made on the occasion in question was that meetings in public thoroughfares were not lawful; that it was only by licence, suffrage, and permission, and by winking at illegality, that any meeting could be held in any public thoroughfare at all. He stated that North, South, East, and West there were places, pointed out by Act of Parliament, where meetings could take place without interruption of traffic, and without interference and without inconvenience to trade and business in this crowded Metropolis. But, unfortunately, last autumn those meetings which had been, though illegal, such as the authorities could regard as likely to do no harm, assumed proportions that required in the interest of public security a prohibition from the authorities. That was the justification of his action, and gave a wholly different form to the arguments used by the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was afraid the right hon. Gentleman had not quite understood his statement, because that was quite consistent with the version of the matter the right hon. Gentleman had just given and the argument he had laid down. The right hon. gentleman denied the legal right of the people to use Trafalgar Square as a meeting place, but, at the same time, he conceded that usage had established the custom of using the Square for the purpose.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is a Rule of the House that forbids a recurrence to former debates in the Session. The hon. Member can by question refer to a former debate, but he cannot go into a question which has been the subject of debate on a former occasion.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, then he would put his observation into the form of a question, and ask the Home Secretary, did he now see his way to continue the action of former Governments, including Conservative Governments, to permit public meetings in Trafalgar Square for legal purposes; whether, in view of the different state of things existing now from that which existed in the autumn, he would withdraw the prohibition?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, no; he could not see his way to make any alteration which might prevent the peaceful and orderly use of Trafalgar Square by the public.

Vote *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £61,073, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, this was an extremely important Vote, and he wished to make some observations upon it. But the Committee had been discussing Votes for a long time, and he thought the Government might be satisfied with the result, and not ask the Committee to take more Votes at that hour (11.5.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. P. O' Connor.*)

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he was quite prepared to admit that considerable progress had been made with Supply during the last two nights, and he should be sorry to ask the Committee to proceed beyond a time when it was entirely agreeable to do so under the circumstances. The Government were grateful to the Committee for the satisfactory and business-like spirit with which the Votes had been dealt with, and would not object to Progress being reported, but they must ask that the Report of Supply granted on the previous night should be taken immediately afterwards.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [5th April] *reported.*

First and Second Resolutions *agreed to.*

Third Resolution read a first and second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, though he did not see the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in his place, he desired to offer a personal explanation, and put himself right with the House, by saying that having that morning looked over the answer he gave the hon. Member to a question in reference to the administration and control exercised by the Treasury over the Post Office Buildings Vote, he found that answer did not quite accurately represent the facts of the case. He stated, on the previous night, that the Treasury gave no sanction to any application from the Post Office, unless the amount was first included within the Vote sanctioned by Parliament; and, secondly, unless the expenditure was to be appropriated to the particular and specific purpose mentioned in the Estimate. But he (Mr. Jackson) was afraid he went a little too far in saying that the Treasury gave no sanction to any expenditure except for the specified item mentioned in the Estimate. He thought what was present to his mind was this—that when the Estimates were framed, the Treasury was presented with a statement containing a list of all the buildings and all the items which were included in the Estimate, and it was this list he had in his mind, rather than subdivisions of the separate items in question. He was desirous not to mislead by the answer he gave. He knew the hon. Member for East Donegal was usually very accurate in regard to figures, and he (Mr. Jackson) had thought it his duty, and he hoped the House would excuse him for intervening for a few moments, to make himself perfectly clear. He might point out that there was this difficulty, that sometimes negotiations went on for years in regard to an item that might be put in the Estimates for the year, and which was believed by the Post Office Authorities would come in course of payment during the current year. But these negotiations might be protracted, so that the purchase of a site could not be accomplished, or, even if that were not so, tenders for contracts might not be satisfactory, and delay might arise in carrying out the building. Therefore, he would have been right had he said that the Treasury gave no sanction to anything not previously considered and agreed upon; but he did not think he was justified in going so far as he did, and had no desire that the hands of the Treasury should be tied unnecessarily.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he gathered that the House was to understand that the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was right, and that it was in the power of the Treasury to divert expenditure from one item to another item. Was that so?

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, as he understood it, these sums voted for a particular building or for a specific purpose in the Post Office Vote were not necessarily always applied to that item; but the sums voted might be used during the year for other purposes. Then he would ask, might the money be used for purposes not stated in the Estimates; whether a building not mentioned in the Estimate could be erected with money voted for another building?

Mr. JACKSON said, yes, with the sanction of the Treasury. He would take a case to illustrate his meaning. Suppose £10,000 were entered in the Estimate for a Post Office building at Bristol, and suppose unforeseen circumstances arose preventing any portion of that £10,000 being expended during the year, it would be in the power of the Treasury to give authority for the building of a post office at Barnstaple, applying the saving on the Vote through the non-expenditure of the Vote for the building at Bristol to that purpose. He need not say, for hon. Members knew, that in the Estimates at the bottom of the column there was a sum put down for a margin, and there was also an item, he would not say for contingencies, but not for a specified purpose—that was to say, the Postmaster General, with the sanction of the Treasury, might expend it on unforeseen requirements. It might sometimes happen that, negotiations having been going on for the purchase of a site or a building, the transaction suddenly became practicable, the owner possibly agreeing to accept terms he refused in previous years, and then the Treasury exercised that option and power they necessarily had. In some cases—one he had in his mind at the moment—negotiations had been going on for seven years, and the item had appeared in the Estimates over and over again. Of course, the only reason why the money was not used was simply that satisfactory terms were not arrived at.

Sir WALTER FOSTER asked, would it not be better to have a Vote for contingencies set down in the Post Office Estimates?

Mr. JACKSON: There is one.

Sir WALTER FOSTER: If money voted for a Post Office at Bristol were applied to Barnstaple——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member has already spoken.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he did not know the Secretary to the Treasury was going to mention this matter, or he would have sent for his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who was somewhere about the building. He was glad the hon. Gentleman had made his statement; it proved the usual accuracy of his hon. Friend in these matters. He would not attempt to discuss the statement now, but the House would see it was of very grave importance. He was sure that to many Members it came as a painful surprise to find that money voted for a Post Office building at Bristol might actually be devoted to expenditure at Barnstaple; it was contrary to the conception in every man's mind as to the disposal of money voted. He hoped that an opportunity would offer for raising the subject again; he would communicate with his hon. Friend, who would probably refer to it in the form of a question, to see if an end could be put to a state of things that the Secretary to the Treasury must acknowledge was not sound and businesslike.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolutions *agreed to.*

PHARMACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

[*Lords.*]—[Bill 196.]

(*Sir Henry Roscoe.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) said, he must oppose the Motion. The Bill was an old friend, and he regretted that it was very much in the form in which it appeared last year. He had some hope that those responsible for it might, on consideration, have recognized the great injustice they proposed to inflict on men who had very little power to help themselves—chemists' assistants. The Bill proposed to alter the whole status of that body of young men, who, under great difficulties, had got together money to qualify themselves as chemists' assistants, and afterwards to become chemists and druggists. If this Bill passed, these assistants would be deprived of all chance of becoming chemists and druggists.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) rose, and called the Speaker's attention to the number of Members present.

Mr. SPEAKER: There are obviously 40 Members present.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I do not think so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. KELLY proceeded: What was the real meaning of the Bill? It was simply to place these unfortunate chemists' assistants bound hand and foot in the power of an irresponsible body called the Pharmaceutical Society, giving that Society the right to say that no man should be a chemist or druggist unless he attended their lectures, paid their fees, and obtained their certificate. He would not deny the necessity that the men should be fully instructed and qualified for their important duties, but that they were fully qualified the nature of the examinations they were required to pass left little room for doubt. He had the high authority of the Government Inspector, who, in reference to these examinations, said there was every guarantee of competency that candidates who passed might with perfect safety be permitted to exercise the calling of chemists and druggists, and that such a curriculum as was imposed by the Bill was not required, nor was there any reason why the burden of additional expense should be thrown upon the candidates.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Eleven o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 9th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—*Resolutions* [April 6] *reported.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—Customs and Inland Revenue.

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Considered as amended*—Stockton and Middlesbrough Corporations Water.

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland * [201].

Second Reading—Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act (1878) Amendment * [189].

QUESTIONS.

CRIMINAL LAW (SCOTLAND)—DISCHARGE OF PRISONERS FROM BARLINNIE PRISON, GLASGOW.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been drawn to the inconvenience suffered by the inhabitants of Lanarkshire, near the general prison at Barlinnie, owing to the discharge of a large number of prisoners from the prison every morning; whether, until 1886, the prisoners were conveyed in cabs to the Duke Street Prison in Glasgow, and there discharged; whether the new practice has made it necessary to add to the numbers of the county police for the purpose of protecting the roads, at the cost of several hundred pounds; whether it would be possible to make arrangements for the conveyance of the prisoners to Glasgow by omnibus; and, whether he will consider the expediency of making such an arrangement?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Attention has been called to this matter, and the evil is undoubtedly serious. The facts stated in the Question are substantially correct. The matter is under consideration, with a view to ascertain whether arrangements can be made to remedy the evil complained of.

CRIMINAL LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—JOHN COOPER, A PRISONER AT YARMOUTH.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether John Cooper, formerly overseer of Great Yarmouth, who was committed on the 12th of April, 1866, to three months' imprisonment with hard labour by the Yarmouth Justices for misappropriating upwards of £1,100 of parish funds, remained at large until the 5th of February, 1888, and whether he is now treated as a first class misdemeanant, as stated in *The Yarmouth Mercury;* and, whether this is the same person who prominently figures in the Yarmouth Bribery Report of 1886 as the illegal agent of the Tory Party?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: Yes, Sir; this man remained at large during the time stated in the Question, the reason being that he absconded from Yarmouth, and the police, in spite of every effort, were unable to ascertain his whereabouts. The prisoner was committed to prison for three months for non-payment of moneys due from him as overseer. He is treated under the Rules for debtors, to which class he properly belongs. He is the same person who is mentioned in the Yarmouth Bribery Report of 1866, not 1886.

INDIA—THE NIZAM—SIR WILLIAM RUMBOLD, BRITISH MINISTER AT THE HAGUE.

MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Sir Horace Rumbold, British Minister at the Hague, has obtained from the Nizam's Government the promise of a sum of money, stated to be three lakhs of rupees, which is said to be in full settlement of a claim for a sum of 10 or 11 lakhs, founded on his relationship with the late Sir William Rumbold, a partner in the firm of William Palmer and Company, bankers, in Hyderabad, in the early part of this century; and, whether Sir William Rumbold ceased to be a partner in the firm of William Palmer and Company, and had his interest in the firm paid out in full six months before the firm became bankrupt in 1824, thus precluding all claim by Sir William Rumbold or his successors on the Nizam's Government on the ground of his connection with the firm?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has no official information on the subject. Application has more than once been made for the support of the British Government in pressing these claims. The answer has invariably been that "the matter is one for the independent consideration of the Government of the Nizam." The Secretary of State absolutely declined to write to the Viceroy on the subject. The information in the India Office does not support the statement implied in the second paragraph in the Question.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—PAYMENT OF RESULT FEES.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What time after the date of examination for result fees in Irish National schools are such fees paid to the successful candidates; and, whether the same ought not to be paid within one month after the examination?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) (who replied) said: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that their rule and practice is to pay results fees within about a month from the date of the examination; but that an unavoidable delay occasionally arises through the occurrence of irregularities or other matters, which necessitate correspondence with Managers or Inspectors.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND) — SHERIFF SUBSTITUTE AT STORNOWAY.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that, on the 22nd of March, Sheriff Substitute Fraser, sitting without a jury at Stornoway, sentenced a fisherman named Malcolm M'Donald to three months' imprisonment; and, whether, as a Sheriff sitting alone, he had any power to pronounce such a sentence; and, if not, whether the Secretary for Scotland proposes to treat the sentence as *ultra vires* and void, and to order M'Donald's liberation?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The facts are as stated by the hon. Gentleman. The Sheriff had no power to pronounce such a sentence. This man and another sentenced along with him have been set at liberty.

INLAND REVENUE—WINE AND SPIRIT LICENCES — MEXICAN PULQUE — KOUMISS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Commissioners of Inland Revenue have ordered an importer of Mexican pulque in Edinburgh to take out a wine and spirit licence as a condition of his being allowed to retail that beverage; would he explain under what provisions of the law has the demand been made; whether the alcoholic strength of koumiss is equal or superior to that of pulque; and, whether any wine and spirit licence has ever been acquired in the case of persons retailing koumiss in London?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The Board of Inland Revenue have notified to an importer of Mexican pulque that this alcoholic beverage can only be sold by the holder of a spirit licence. A sample of the pulque in question was found to contain over 10 per cent of proof spirit; it was accordingly charged by the Customs with Spirit Duty, and it can only be sold by the owner of a spirit licence. The alcoholic strength of koumiss is considerably less than that of pulque. No person retailing koumiss in London has ever been required to take out a spirit licence.

DR. CAMERON asked, what was the minimum limit of alcoholic strength necessary to bring a liquor within the wine and spirit licence?

MR. JACKSON said, he could not answer the Question without Notice.

DR. CAMERON said, he would repeat his Question in a day or two.

SHOP HOURS REGULATION ACT, 1886—CONVICTIONS (METROPOLIS).

MR. MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, as to the workings of the Shop Hours Regulation Act, 1886, which sets forth that no young persons under the age of 18 shall be employed longer than 74 hours in the week, including meal times, What is the number of convictions under this Act within the Metropolitan area to the 31st of March, 1888?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: From a Return I have received from the Metropolitan Police Courts, it appears that four convictions have been obtained under this Act—three at Marylebone and one at Lambeth.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked, whether it was not the fact that certain Trade Societies had issued Circulars to their members advising them to comply with the law; and that in many cases, when shopkeepers were employing boys and girls over 74 hours in the week, it had been found sufficient to call their attention to the matter, and no legal proceedings had been necessary.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, no doubt the hon. Baronet had just handed him a letter to the Secretary of State to that effect; but he had not had time to ascertain the fact from independent sources.

IRISH CHURCH ACT, 1869—LAND ACT, 1887—SEC. 25—PURCHASERS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How many purchasers under the Irish Church Act of 1869 have applied for the full benefit of recent legislation under the 25th section of the Land Act of 1887; how many of these purchasers so applying represented simple and instalment mortgages respectively; what kinds of tenancies and descriptions of Church property are included in the benefits of the 25th section of the Act of 1887, and the total amount; what is the amount of arrears to be dealt with under the 5th sub-section of the 25th section of the Act; and, how many cases still remain to be settled of the various kinds of purchasers under the 25th section, and what is the cause of the delay in settling them?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): One hundred and forty persons, out of 430 mortgages dealt with under Sub-section 3 of the section referred to, have submitted "special circumstances" for the consideration of the Land Commissioners under subsection 4, with a view to the further extension of their terms of repayment, with consequent reductions of the instalments. These cases are all those of instalment mortgagors, the terms in the case of simple mortgagors being fixed by the third sub-section. This section of the Act of 1887 includes all mortgages on land (but not those on perpetuity rents) under the 52nd section of the Church Act, except those already dealt with under the 23rd section of the Act of 1885. The annual income affected by the section may be roughly stated at £35,000. About £40,000 of arrears have to be dealt with under the 5th sub-section, due on 402 instalment mortgages and 183 simple mortgages. But the time allowed for payment of the portions of these arrears to be recovered has not yet expired; and it is, therefore, impossible to say how many will actually get the benefit of this section. Eighty-six instalment mortgages, in arrear about £1,000, are still unsettled, principally because the mortgagors had already applied for relief under the Act of 1885, and their legal position is, therefore, doubtful.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS — BELL LANE, SPITALFIELDS.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, with reference to the Bell Lane, Spitalfields, Improvement Scheme, Whether he is aware that the average number of residents per acre in the Metropolis is stated to be 54, in Whitechapel 177, in Spitalfields 286, in Bell Lane it is 600, which last average might be fairly increased to 900, owing to the residential accommodation being restricted by the large free school building and omnibus yard in Bell Lane; and, whether the Metropolitan Board of Works will take steps to carry out immediately the Bell Lane Improvement Scheme, which has been so many years in abeyance?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) said, no doubt the figures contained in the Question were a fair approximation to correctness. The question of preparing a scheme for the improvement of Bell Lane was before the Board; but the consideration of it had been adjourned until July, when it was customary to determine what schemes should be submitted to Parliament for the following year. When the time came, the question to which the hon. Member referred would receive careful consideration.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA—THE INQUIRY.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, as the Representative of the Agricultural Department, Whether the proposed Committee of Inquiry into pleuro-pneumonia in cattle is to be empowered to conduct practical experiments, with the view of ascertaining the value of inoculation, &c.; and, if not, why not?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes): I am afraid that no definite answer can be given to my hon. Friend until the Committee is formed. It is intended that the Committee shall itself decide what is needful to bring it to sound conclusions; and, therefore, Rules could not be laid down in advance for the conduct of the inquiry.

MR. HOZIER gave Notice that when the Vote for the Privy Council came on for consideration in Committee of Supply he should call attention to the subject.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—SECTIONS 18 AND 20.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a statement showing the present amount paid for the licences mentioned in Sections 18 and 20 of the Local Government Bill, in each of the counties in England and Wales, and distinguishing the amounts paid by the inhabitants of the Quarter Sessions boroughs mentioned in Clause 31?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The proceeds of the Licence Duties now levied as received by the Inland Revenue have reference to collections, and not to counties or boroughs. Any analysis, such as that suggested, if undertaken by the local officers, would be a work of much labour, and involve considerable time; and, as regards licences issued through post offices, the allocation to counties could only be of an approximate nature. Moreover, no estimate could be given as to the produce of the proposed licences for trade carts and horses in the different counties and boroughs. It is also to be borne in mind that, as regards the licences which are not required to be taken out in a particular district, it is not improbable that there would be material changes as regards the districts in which they will be taken out in future. I am afraid, therefore, that such a Return as that suggested would be of little real value.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER thought the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood his Question. There could be no difficulty in obtaining the information mentioned in the Question, for he had been supplied with it as far as regarded the town of Wolverhampton.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the amounts were not allocated to counties or boroughs, but to collections.

In reply to a further Question,

Mr. RITCHIE said, it would be possible for him to grant the right hon. Gentleman a Return of the existing public-house and beer licences.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—AUDIT OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE SCHOOL AND OTHERS.

Mr. JAMES (Gateshead) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in the past 12 months, during the audits of the Gateshead School Board and Union, the Newcastle-on-Tyne School Board and Union, and the Tynemouth Union, it has been the habit of the auditor to remain over night during his audits; and, if so, whether he charged £1 per night for each night he so stayed in addition to his salary and expenses, and on what ground he was entitled to do so?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The auditor of the district which includes the places named resides at Darlington, and during the period mentioned it has been his usual practice, when auditing the accounts of the Gateshead School Board and Union and the Tynemouth Union, to remain overnight at the audit, and he has received the usual allowance of £1 per night when so absent from home. The railway journey to and from Gateshead would involve travelling 80 miles each day; while the difference between the allowance for personal expenses when absent from home at night and the travelling expenses would be 2*s.* 10*d.* Similar observations apply to the Tynemouth audit, except that North Shields, where the audit is held, is at a greater distance from Darlington than Gateshead, and a longer time would be occupied in travelling. Long journeys must necessarily seriously interfere with the time available for audit and correspondence and preparation of Reports; and I am satisfied that the arrangement to which attention is drawn was in the public interest.

RAILWAYS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY—THE TODMORDEN JUNCTION.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to the absence of subways or bridges at Todmorden Station, the principal junction of the East Lancashire section with the main line of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway; whether he is aware that it has been estimated that, on the average, nearly 1,000 persons per diem are now compelled to cross the lines on the level; whether the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company have more than once expressed to the Todmorden Local Board, and also to the Board of Trade, their intention of removing the danger of this level crossing; and, whether, having regard to the protracted delay of the Company in carrying out the promised improvements at Todmorden Station, the Board of Trade will again draw the attention of the Company to the serious danger of leaving the station any longer without either subway or bridge?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have, as was pointed out to the hon. Member in reply to a similar Question last year, no statutory power to require the Company to supply a subway or bridge at Todmorden Station. They have, however, been in frequent communication with the Company on the subject; and they are assured that the Company hope to be shortly in a position to take up the improvement of the station. I shall be glad to show the hon. Member a letter which the Board of Trade have recently received on the subject.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAXES.

MR. H. S. WRIGHT (Nottingham, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will re-consider the proposed tax (£1 in addition to Wheel Tax) on all vehicles over 10 cwt. by raising the limit of weight to such a figure as would not include ordinary one-horse carts used for carrying coal and other goods; whether, whilst reserving the £1 tax for vehicles exceeding such increased limit, he would impose only 10*s.* as Wheel Tax on those coming within it; and, whether he will consider the expediency of imposing a higher tax than the £1 on traction engines and drays used for carrying excessive weights, such as boilers and heavy machinery, in view of the damage done to roads by these latter vehicles?

The hon. Gentleman also asked, Whether, with regard to the proposed tax on the heavier class of carts, the right hon. Gentleman has taken into consideration the probable effect it will have in causing carts to be made with narrow wheels in order to save weight; and, whether, with the view of preventing the serious damage to roads which would result from the general use of narrow-wheeled carts for heavy loads, he will consider the expediency of exempting from the Wheel Tax wheels of not less breadth than four inches?

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman answered that Question, he should like to ask him whether he was not prepared, unconditionally and at once, to withdraw his proposal with regard to the Van and Wheel Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Speaker, certainly not. In answer to the Question upon the Paper, the present is not the proper time to discuss changes in detail in the proposed Cart Tax, such as whether the limit of the higher rate of duty should be placed at 10 cwt., or at some greater weight. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage, hon. Members will have every opportunity of urging their views on such questions of detail. With regard to traction-engines, I do propose, though I do not think I explained this in my Budget Statement, to impose a higher rate of duty than £1. I may take this opportunity of answering the hon. Gentleman's other Question; and I would say that I do not think that the tax is likely to have any effect upon the make of wheels.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will take into consideration the question of horses employed by medical men and ministers of religion with a view to the modification of the proposed tax in the cases of such horses, if he cannot see his way to relinquish it?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As I have already informed an hon. Member, the Government are giving consideration to the special reasons which seem to justify the claim of medical men and ministers of religion to enjoy certain exemptions with regard to the Horse Duty. I am studying the precedents, and I hope to be able to a certain extent to meet my hon. Friend's views.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 — DEPUTY OFFICIAL RECEIVER FOR THE GUILDFORD DISTRICT.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When Mr. Britten ceased to act as Deputy Official Receiver at Guildford, and the dates of the several applications to the Board made by the Official Receiver for the appointment of a Deputy, the grounds thereof (if any), and the periods for which Mr. Britten was nominated to be Deputy?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Mr. Britten's last appointment as Deputy Official Receiver for the Guildford District under the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, expired on the 3rd of October, 1887, since which date no further application has been received from the Official Receiver for an appointment of Deputy under the Act. Mr. Britten was appointed Deputy Official Receiver for a period of eight days in October, 1884; for about a month in September, 1886; for five days in July, and for between three and four weeks in September, 1887. The grounds of the applications were the absence of the Official Receiver on his vacation, or for other causes.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—AD VALOREM STAMP TAX.

Mr. **WATT** (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will consider the desirability of substituting a tax *ad valorem* for his proposed 6*d.* Stamp Tax, having regard to the small sums involved in many such transactions; and, whether he will also consider the question of applying the tax to contracts of all descriptions, including those of a speculative character between brokers and dealers?

The **CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; I do not propose to substitute an *ad valorem* stamp for the 6*d.* stamp on contract notes; but I hope to meet the first point raised by the hon. Member by confining the new stamp of 6*d.* to contract notes over £100. Those of a less amount will continue to pay only 1*d.*, as at present. With regard to the extension of the tax which he suggests, I do not contemplate it, at any rate in the present year. But it must be very gratifying to a Chancellor of the Exchequer to find that no sooner does he impose any particular duty than he is overwhelmed with suggestions for the imposition of a similar duty in many other cases which are alleged to be analogous. I am careful to take a note of these suggestions.

ADMIRALTY—TORPEDO NET DEFENCE COMMITTEE—STEEL BOOMS.

Admiral **FIELD** (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have decided against any further trial of steel booms, as proposed by Mr. Bullivant, in lieu of wooden booms in connection with the net defence of ironclads against torpedoes; and, if this be so, whether the matter can be re-considered, inasmuch as the trial asked for would be at the expense of the inventor, and with stronger booms; whether he is aware that naval opinion outside the Admiralty is strongly in favour of steel booms, as being at least five cwt. lighter, and superior in many other respects, besides being about one-third less costly than wooden ones; and, whether the Committee on Torpedo Net Defence have reported in favour of steel booms?

The **FIRST LORD** (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is not proposed to carry out any further experiments with Mr. Bullivant's steel booms, as they were found to double up on the explosion of a torpedo, and could not be straightened with the ordinary resources of a ship, while wooden booms, if broken, can be easily replaced. Steel booms are also more liable to damage than wooden ones from accidental causes, such as are caused by lighters or tugs coming alongside. The Committee on Torpedo Net Defence recommended a trial of steel booms of a different pattern from those of Mr. Bullivant; but no decision will be come to until further trials of wooden booms have been carried out.

Admiral **FIELD** gave Notice that he would call further attention to this matter in Committee of Supply on the Navy Estimates.

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICE —A CONSUL AT NISCH (TURKEY).

Mr. **LEGH** (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in view of the near opening of the new railways to Constantinople and Salonica, Her Majesty's Government have considered the advisability of appointing a Consul at Nisch?

The **UNDER SECRETARY of STATE** (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): A Consul has just been appointed at Nisch.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—VISITING JUSTICES OF ST. ALBAN'S GAOL.

Viscount **GRIMSTON** (Herts, St. Alban's) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware that a prisoner in St. Alban's Gaol, named Henry Moody, was permitted to remain there after his discharge on account of his being ill; that the Committee of Visiting Justices of the prison requested the prison surgeon to furnish them with a certificate of his condition; that upon this the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Prisons sent down Colonel Hanken, Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons, to attend the next meeting of the Visiting Justices at St. Alban's Gaol, and intimate to them that if they wished for a certificate as to the health of a prisoner in St. Alban's Gaol they must direct their inquiries to the Prison Commissioners in London, who would send them back information from London to St. Alban's; that the Chairman of the Visiting Justices, in consequence, tendered his resignation to the Herts Court of Quarter Sessions; that the Court of Quarter Sessions, some 60 magistrates being present, approved his action, and unanimously passed a Resolution that the subject should be brought to the notice of the Home Secretary; and, what action does Her Majesty's Government intend to take in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The facts as stated to me are not the same as those which are suggested in the Question of my noble Friend. I hope he will excuse my entering into details, as I understand that I am likely to receive a communication on the subject from the Quarter Sessions, to which I will give the fullest and most careful consideration. The instructions of the Prison Commissioners are that the medical and other officers shall attend the Visiting Committee with their books, and furnish them with all the information they require.

VISCOUNT GRIMSTON asked, whether it was to be understood, from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, that if Visiting Justices desired to obtain a certificate as to the health of a prisoner, a Commissioner from London was to be sent down to give them information which they could obtain in the prison itself from the officials?

MR. MATTHEWS: It was not my intention to convey such an impression.

INDIA — CASE OF MR. WILLIAM TAYLER, FORMERLY COMMISSIONER OF PATNA.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the statement of the case of Mr. William Tayler, formerly Commissioner of Patna, published in *The Times* of the 6th of April; whether it is true that Mr. Tayler's Petition "disappeared" from the India Office at some date between 1868 and 1878; whether any inquiry has been made as to the circumstances of such disappearance; and, if so, whether the results of that inquiry will be laid upon the Table of the House; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take any steps to ensure that substantial justice be done in Mr. Tayler's case?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1.) The statements made in *The Times* of April 6th have, during the last 30 years, been repeatedly brought to the attention of successsive Secretaries of State. (2.) The original Petition was lost between 1868 and 1878; but copies are extant, and have been laid before Parliament. (3.) There is no reason to suppose that the loss was anything but one of those accidents which sometimes occur in the best regulated Departments; and no further inquiry is, in the judgment of the Secretary of State, necessary. (4.) The Secretary of State is not willing to constitute himself a Court of Appeal against the uniform decision of his Predecessors during so long a period.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE gave Notice that he would call attention to this case on the earliest opportunity.

NATIONAL DEBT CONVERSION—TRUSTEES.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the new duty of 10*s*. per cent. on the transfer of Stocks will apply to Trust Funds, whenever transfers take place on a new Trustee being appointed and the transfer to new owners is nominal only, such transfers being at present exempt under Section 78 of "The Stamp Duties Act, 1870?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; the duty on the transfer of Stocks will not apply to any transfer of Stocks where there is not a real sale and purchase. The merely formal transfers necessitated by the appointment of a new Trustee will be exempt from Stamp Duty, as they are at present.

FOREIGN OFFICE—SIR HENRY DRUMMOND WOLFF'S MISSION TO TEHERAN.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the object of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's visit to Teheran; how long his Mission there is likely to last; and, how much he is paid over and above travelling expenses?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Sir Henry Drummond Wolff has been appointed to be Her Majesty's Minister in Persia. His salary, as such, appears in the Diplomatic Estimates.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—KING JA JA.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when the Papers in connection with King Ja Ja's case will be laid upon the Table.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Papers are nearly ready, and I hope that they will be in the hands of hon. Members at the end of next week.

JAMAICA—MR. GIBBONS, LATE DISTRICT JUDGE.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the fact that, according to medical certificate duly made, the arduous services of Mr. Gibbons, late District Judge in Jamaica, produced hernia, thus disabling him for the discharge of his duties; and, whether, in the circumstances, the Colonial Office will favourably consider the propriety of granting him a retiring pension?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government have no power to grant pensions for services in Jamaica; and if it were not so, the circumstances connected with Mr. Gibbon's retirement would preclude him from receiving a pension.

MEDICAL ACT, 1886, SEC. 17—QUALIFIED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

MR. A. MORLEY (Nottingham, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether registered medical practitioners in the United Kingdom are afforded privileges of practising in the United States of America; and, whether any steps have been taken, or are in contemplation, by the Privy Council, under section 17 of "The Medical Act, 1886," in the direction of similar privileges being given to legally qualified American practitioners who may be desirous of practising medicine in the United Kingdom?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): No statement has been received by the Privy Council from the Government of the United States showing the privileges afforded to registered medical practitioners of the United Kingdom to practise in America, nor has request been made by that Government for the application of Part II. of the Medical Act, 1886, to America.

EGYPT—THE NEW LOAN.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can now state what is the amount which the Egyptian Government propose to borrow, and how the new Loan will rank with reference to the existing Privileged and Unified Loans under the International Agreements and the Decree relating to those Loans?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The amount which the Egyptian Government propose to borrow at the present time is £E2,000,000. The new Loan will not take precedence of, or affect the securities pledged to, previous Loans.

POLICE COURTS (METROPOLIS)—MR. WONTNER, SOLICITOR.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether Mr. Wontner, a solicitor of the Supreme Court, has recently acted in numerous cases as advocate at the police courts for constables of the Metropolitan Police who have been summoned for assaults;

at whose instance he has so acted; whether his remuneration, or any part thereof, has been provided at the public expense; and, if so, under what statute or authority; whether similar assistance is, or has been, afforded to postmen or other public officials charged with crime; and, whether any pecuniary aid is afforded to the complainants in such cases?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): In some cases, on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police, I have directed that Messrs. Wontner should be instructed to give legal aid to police-constables. Such aid is only given when there is *primâ facie* reason to suppose that the constable is in the right, and the case is one requiring legal assistance. If the case is doubtful the constable is left to defend himself. Payment of such expenses is made from the Metropolitan Police Fund under 10 *Geo.* IV. c. 44, s. 12. I am not aware what assistance is given to officials in other Public Departments who are charged with offences while acting in the execution of their duty. No pecuniary assistance is given to complainants in such cases.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES asked, on whose recommendation Mr. Wontner was employed?

MR. MATTHEWS said, the recommendation, in the first instance, came from the Commissioner of Police, and the responsibility for the decision upon it rested with the Home Office.

WAR OFFICE—RE-TEST OF SMALL ARMS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any small arms (other than rifles) in the hands of British troops still remain without having been recently re-tested, and what proportion of these re-tested proved to be up to the Government standard; and, what is the system upon which the periodical inspection of such arms will take place, and at what interval of time every weapon will be so inspected?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): All the arms of the Infantry of the First Army Corps have been re-tested. The examination of those of the Cavalry will be completed immediately; and of the arms in the hands of other Regular troops with all the speed possible. The Returns of the numbers which passed the standard are not yet complete. The system will be that inspection of arms is made at home by viewers specially detached from the Inspection Staff under the immediate supervision of the Chief Inspector of Small Arms. It is intended that this inspection shall be annual in the case of Regular troops; biennial for the Militia; and triennial for the Volunteers; and that it shall extend to every weapon used. Arrangements as regards inspection of arms abroad are not yet completed.

ADMIRALTY—DOCKYARD EXPENDITURE AND ACCOUNTS.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he will place upon the Table of the House, for the information of Members, a Return showing, for the year 1887-8, first, the amount of labour expended on; second, the value of materials appropriated at Her Majesty's Dockyards at home to each of the ships and services particularized in the Navy Estimates (Appendix) for the year 1887-8, pages 169 to 199 and 216 to 223; third, the dates of delivery at the several Dockyards of ships constructed by contractors?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): This information will be given in the Shipbuilding Expense Accounts for 1887-8, which are now in course of completion, and will, it is anticipated, be in a shape to lay before the House in June next. It seems, therefore, unnecessary to anticipate the Return as suggested. This is the first year that particulars of actual expenditure have been available at such an early date after the close of the financial year, past Returns of expense accounts not having been in the hands of Members until over 12 months from the termination of the year to which they relate.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—SERVICE AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked, Whether it was true that Sir Charles Warren had issued an Order to prevent constables from serving more than three years in the House of Commons, and to remove men who had served the House more than a quarter of a century, and whose knowledge of Members was of great value? He also asked, whether the Home Secretary could prevent such an Order from being carried out?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! A similar Question is upon the Paper.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether Sir Charles Warren has issued an Order that, in future, no constable or sergeant shall serve at the Houses of Parliament for a longer period than three years; and, if so, whether, before the issue of this Order, Sir Charles Warren communicated with the Authorities of this House, and obtained their sanction to the proposed change?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): An Order has been issued by the Commissioner of Police that no constable should serve more than three years at the Houses of Parliament, except in very special and deserving cases. No official communication was made to the Authorities of the House with respect to the Order, which was issued, after careful consideration, as the most desirable plan in the interests of Members and the safety of the House. I am not aware that it will meet with objection from the Authorities; but I shall be happy to discuss any objections which the hon. Gentleman thinks the Order is open to.

MR. PICKERSGILL: On the earliest opportunity I shall call attention to the anomaly that servants of this House are under the control of an alien authority, and shall move a Resolution.

SCOTLAND—DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to the wide-spread destitution which prevails in the Highlands consequent on the recent failure of the herring fishery; and, if so, what steps the Government mean to take to meet the requirements of the case?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Her Majesty's Government are kept fully informed of the present state of matters in the Highlands. The fishing has been exceptionally good lately, and there has been no cause for the Government to take special action. The Local Authorities, with the aid of private benevolence, are able to deal with any destitution that still exists.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) UXBRIDGE — DISTRICT CASES—WINDSOR COUNTY COURT.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked Mr. Attorney General, On what ground bankruptcy proceedings arising at Uxbridge and its neighbourhood are conducted at the County Court at Windsor, and not at the Uxbridge County Court, thus putting to great inconvenience all the Uxbridge suitors, professional men, and witnesses, and obliging them to waste time and money by going over to Windsor instead of transacting the business at their own Court, which is presided over by the same Judge; whether he can explain how this state of things arose; and, if he will take steps to put an end to such an anomaly?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): Prior to the Act of 1869 Uxbridge was attached to the London Bankruptcy Court. By an Order of the Lord Chancellor in January, 1870, the Uxbridge County Court District was included in the District of the Windsor County Court for bankruptcy purposes, and has continued to form part of that District down to the present time. No complaint has ever been made of this arrangement during the 18 years. I am informed that during the last four years there has only been one bankruptcy case from the Uxbridge District.

WALES—DISCOVERY OF GOLD—RIGHTS OF THE CROWN.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the large find of gold in certain parts of Wales, the yield equalling, it is said, the best gold mines in the world; and, whether the precious metals so found, or their equivalent value, are, by law, the property of the Crown under the Acts 1 *Will. & Mary*, s. 2, c. 30; 5 & 6 *Will. & Mary*, c. 6; and 55 *Geo.* III.

c. 134; and, if so, whether the Government are taking any, and, if so, what, steps to insure that the gold so found, or its equivalent value, is secured to the State in accordance with the provisions of the law?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Notice has been given by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests that all mines Royal of gold and silver, wherever found in the United Kingdom, belong to the Crown, and are not to be worked without authority from the Commissioners. The Commissioners are taking steps to insure that a fair equivalent for the gold found in Wales is secured for the Crown and the public.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882 (BELL RESIDUE BEQUEST).

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate a Question, of which he had given private Notice, Whether the scheme for the Bell residue fund was laid before and duly considered at a meeting of the Scotch Education Department for approval; if so, the date of the meeting, and what members were present; also, whether the members present had before them, and had read over to them, the scheme and the objection thereto lodged by the Glasgow University authorities; and, whether the scheme and objections had been personally considered by the members present at that meeting?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I must certainly decline to give any information of anything that took place at the meeting of the Privy Council. The question of calling a special meeting of the Privy Council with reference to education in Scotland is an administrative one, which rests with the Lord President and Vice President. It is not necessary to adopt that in the case of the Bell Institute scheme now lying on the Table of the House. The objections of the different parties to the scheme were laid before the Vice President, and duly considered by him.

COAL MINES—ACCIDENT AT WIGAN.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State to the Home Department, Whether he could give the House any information with reference to the serious shaft accident which had lately occurred at a colliery in the neighbourhood of Wigan; and, what steps were being taken to insure a full investigation into the circumstances of the calamity?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have asked the Inspector for a full Report of all the circumstances; and when I receive his Report I will consider whether a special inquiry is necessary.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES IN KILRUSH—TRIAL OF PRISONERS—MR. IRWIN, R.M.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which he had given private Notice, Whether it was true, as stated in *The Daily News* of that morning, that at the time of the collision between the military and the police and the people of Kilrush on Sunday all the military and police arrangements were under the supreme command of Mr. Irwin, R.M.; whether Mr. Irwin, in conjunction with Captain Welsh, tried, on November 8th last, in Kilrush, under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, in one batch, 18 persons, who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, accompanied in some instances with hard labour, and without power of appeal; whether Mr. Irwin had, between August 17th, 1887, and March 16th, 1888, tried in all 132 persons under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and, whether it was in accordance with Constitutional usage that the same person should exercise simultaneously judicial and political functions?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot reply to the matters contained in the first two paragraphs of the hon. Gentleman's Question, because I have not yet received from Ireland a full official Report of the proceedings of yesterday. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, in which the hon. Member asks whether it is in accordance with Constitutional usage that the same person should exercise simultaneously judicial and political functions, I have to say if by that he means the same person exercising judicial and executive functions at different times, it is absolutely in accordance with Constitutional usage. But that is not the usual meaning of the word simultaneously, which means at the same time. Mr. Irwin did not exercise "at the same time" both judicial and political functions.

Mr. MAC NEILL: I wish to know, whether the office of this gentleman is of such a character that it is consistent with his office that he should exercise judicial functions at one time and political functions at another?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I wish to ask whether, under the administration of the Crimes Act of 1882, care was not always taken that the same person should not exercise judicial functions and administrative functions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. It has always been the practice, not only in Ireland, but in England and Scotland, for the same person to exercise at different times executive and judicial functions. Every Magistrate in England and Ireland, and every Sheriff in Scotland, may be called upon to exercise these different functions at different times.

Mr. MAC NEILL: Would the right hon. Gentleman answer me a further Question? Whether it is in the right hon. Gentleman's recollection that he answered a Question last Session in which he relied on Resident Magistrates in Ireland not using judicial functions, but merely exercising administrative functions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is now referring to Divisional Magistrates.

Mr. MAC NEILL: Yes; Divisional Magistrates.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: But they never exercise judicial functions at all.

Mr. MAC NEILL: Would the right hon. Gentleman kindly answer the third and fourth paragraphs of my Question?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am obliged to inform the hon. Gentleman that, to my regret, I cannot answer to-day Questions referring to the proceedings of yesterday, as I have not yet received any Report.

Mr. MAC NEILL said, he should repeat his Question.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

In reply to Mr. Channing (Northampton, E.),

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, there had been a very large demand for copies of this Bill, 17,000 copies having been sold at the published price, which, undoubtedly, was a high one. He had made arrangements that within a few days copies of a cheap edition would be on sale at 3*d*. each.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Wheel Tax was intended to apply to vehicles which never left the works of their owners, and never used the public roads; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the question of extending the exemption to other persons besides farmers, to whom vehicles were more entirely an implement of trade than to farmers?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the Question is rather one for debate on the Budget proposals. Of course, I will gladly consider all the representations made to me upon the subject. The point which the hon. Member brings to my notice is an important one; but it is not one that can be dealt with in an answer to a Question. I have to receive some deputations from persons interested in these vehicles; and I shall then be able to discuss with them the various objections they have to raise to the tax.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would have any objection to lay upon the Table the figures relating to those duties which would not affect the Budget strictly, but which he gave in his speech? At present there was no official information on the subject.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am not sure that I entirely apprehend the meaning of my right hon. Friend. Does he mean the details with regard to the Wheel Tax?

If so, no statement can be given in detail, except the Estimate. Does my right hon. Friend mean how much is expected to be derived from each tax?

MR. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; I do mean that. At present we have only got those figures in the speech of my right hon. Friend. I should like to have them as a Return.

MR. GOSCHEN: These figures have not been given, because it is an important point to bear in mind that the proceeds of these taxes do not affect the Imperial Budget. I should have no difficulty, however, in putting before the House the figures and statements in my Budget Speech referring to these taxes.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES IN KILRUSH—TRIAL OF PRISONERS—MR. IRWIN, R.M.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which I have given him private Notice. I wish to ask him, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the following paragraph in the report of Mr. Murray, a reporter on *The Freeman's Journal*, in reference to yesterday's proceedings. The paragraph is this—

> "Colonel Turner was about three yards from the entrance, and he directed the police to take the names of the people who had been at the meeting. Some of the policemen were engaged doing, this when I heard Colonel Turner order the police to draw their batons. The order was executed with savage alacrity, and the police rushed in among the people. I was standing along with some representatives of the Press at the gate, within a few feet of Colonel Turner, who was in a state bordering on frenzy, his eyes protruding, and apparently beside himself with agitation. The policeman who was in front rushed at me and dealt me a staggering blow with his baton on the top of the head, which made me reel backwards, the blood flowing profusely down my face. The people were beaten in the most wanton and unmerciful manner, a portion of the police running amuck among the meeting right and left with ferocious savagery. However, not content with this, Colonel Turner ordered the hussars to charge the people, and they instantly made their way into the small yard with drawn sabres, cutting at the people. Mr. John G. Hill, the representative of *The Irish Times*——"

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is exceeding the limits of a Question. No Notice has apparently been given by the hon. Member that he intended to put such a Question.

MR. W. REDMOND: Of course, Mr. Speaker, I bow to your ruling; but I had given the right. hon. Gentleman Notice. The purport of my Question is this—Whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman has been called to the fact that two representatives of the Press were yesterday seriously wounded by hussars and police; and whether it is the intention of the Government to bring to punishment the persons who assaulted the representatives of the Press, who were merely doing their duty; or whether it is the intention of the Government to cause an inquiry to be made into this most wanton attack on the representatives of the Press, who were not doing anything to provoke it?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I must repeat the answer which I gave a few moments ago, when I had to state that, unfortunately, I could not answer Questions to-day on official authority, as no official Report has reached me.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman—departing from the precedent of every other Gentleman who has filled the Office of Chief Secretary—has not thought it worth his while to telegraph to Ireland for the purpose of supplying information to the House of Commons with regard to the very exciting events of yesterday?

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any Reports?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe I have acted in the same manner as every one of my Predecessors has acted in similar circumstances. It is, of course, impossible that officials who were engaged on Sunday can have prepared their full Reports by this time.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to take proceedings against the publisher and vendors of *The Times* newspaper of to-day, in consequence of its publishing reports of meetings in the proclaimed districts of Ireland?

[No reply.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) asked, When the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill would be proceeded with?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am unable to say, but I hope it may be taken soon. Perhaps I may add a word as to the course of Business. We have every hope that the Budget Resolutions will be agreed to by the House this evening. If it should not be the case, it will be our duty to ask for a Morning Sitting to-morrow to proceed with them.

INDIA—THE INDIAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION—THE REPORT.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Why the Report of the Indian Public Service Commission, which was formally laid on the Table of the House some weeks ago, and had been reviewed in the newspapers, had not yet been distributed to Members?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham), in reply, said, the Question ought rather to be addressed to someone connected with the printing of the Papers.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: May I ask who is responsible to this House in such a matter.

[No reply.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND [SALARY, &c.].—REPORT.

Resolutions *reported.*

Resolutions read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry) said, he thought it was very unhandsome, to say the least of it, that this Order should be pressed on the House when a large number of the Irish Members were absent, as was perfectly well known to the Government. It was equally well known to the Government that every Irish Nationalist Member objected most strongly to the present proposal. What was the occasion for now pressing forward the measure, even supposing it were a good one, with this remarkable and this unseemly haste? As they knew, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) in whose favour the Bill was brought forward, was now absent from the House and from the country—absent, he (Mr. M'Carthy) was sorry to say, owing to ill-health. As they knew also, there was no peculiar pressure of work so far as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was concerned. In former Sessions the Irish Questions numbered far more than they had numbered at any time during this Session. They could all recollect that during the time when the late Mr. Forster was Chief Secretary for Ireland, it was a very common and frequent thing for Irish Members to move, as then they had a right to move, the Adjournment of the House on some answer to a Question, and thus to start a long debate in which the Chief Secretary had to bear a part. Such things never occurred now, they could not occur under the new regulations of the House, and the number of Questions had greatly diminished. He could not see then why at present the right hon. Gentleman was so anxious to get the subject brought before the House. Being convinced that the Government were pressing forward the Bill to-night in an unfair spirit, he would give the House an opportunity of relieving the Government from the position in which they stood, and he would, therefore, move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

After a pause,

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, they were having new precedents in that House every day. The Motion for the Adjournment having been moved and seconded, and no Member on the Treasury Bench having thought it worth his while to get up and give any answer to it, he thought that was a form of discourtesy which was unknown in that House until they were blessed with the present Chief Secretary. He must say he never knew a case of shabbier conduct on the part of the Government than had been shown in this instance. Both the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the First Lord of the Treasury were perfectly well aware that a very large number of Irish Members could not be in their places to-day, for the Chief Secretary took care to give them plenty of work yesterday. He knew very well they would be absent, and even to-night he had told the House that he had not been able to get, even by telegraph, from his subordinates information with regard to the events that took place in Ireland yesterday, and yet he expected Irishmen to be in the House who had taken part in those proceedings yesterday in Ireland. Another reason why it was inopportune and unfair of the Government to put this down as the first Order of the Day was that they must have known that it would interfere very seriously with the Order of the other Business. Everybody knew that to-night they were to discuss one of the most important events of the Session—namely, the Budget proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and it was also then that the debate on those Budget proposals was to be initiated by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and, therefore, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) could not help thinking that the Government must have intended in the bringing forward this Bill as the first Order of the Day, not only to take advantage of the absence of Irish Members—which, he thought, was a mean and rather shabby way of doing business—but to throw back the speech of the Leader of the Opposition to an inconvenient hour, when the majority of Members would be absent from the House. He could not understand tactics of that kind, and cordially joined his hon. Friend (Mr. Justin McCarthy) in making a protest against now bringing forward the Bill, and hoped he would go to a Division.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had not risen to discuss the question of the Adjournment of the Debate because he did not wish to waste the time of the House. ["Oh, oh!"] Within the last 20 years, during which he (Mr. Smith) had had a seat in the House, he did not remember another case in which the merely preliminary stages of a Bill that were rendered necessary by the fact that the Bill was a Money Bill, had been so canvassed and opposed step by step as in the present instance, and Divisions taken upon them. ["Hear, hear!"] He made no complaint of a Division being taken upon the introduction of a Bill, or debate upon it; but Divisions and debates had been frequent upon every stage of this Resolution, which had been rendered necessary by the Forms of the House, and within his recollection no such course had been taken before. Under those circumstances, he did not consider it respectful to the House to discuss the Motion, and he hoped hon. Members would not consider it requisite to go to a Division. Hon. Members had complained that he had taken no Notice of the absence of hon. Members from Ireland; but the fact was that the present was a purely formal stage. He had repeatedly stated that ample Notice would be given of the stage of the second reading of the Bill which would follow, when hon. Gentlemen from Ireland would have full opportunity of debating the Bill, and of taking such a course with regard to it as they thought right. But he did not think he was bound, on a simple formal stage, to postpone it beyond that day, which was the third day after the House had re-assembled.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he joined in the appeal of the Irish Members to the Government to postpone this stage of the Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Smith) had observed that there was no precedent for organized opposition to a Bill at that stage; but, on the other hand, there was no precedent for the Government on an important night like that putting down a Measure which was really a private Bill brought forward in the interests of a single individual as the First Order. As to the course taken by hon. Members from Ireland, that showed the state of feeling in Ireland on the matter, and it demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of the Irish Members objected to the proposal both as regarded the personal side of the measure and its general scope.

MR. W. H. SMITH rose to Order, and asked whether the hon. Gentleman was speaking to the question of the adjournment?

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he was only replying to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman himself, and he hoped he was not transgressing so far as to render it absolutely necessary for the right hon. Gentleman to interfere. If the proposal had been one affecting Scotch interests, he believed that the Members for Scotland would have occupied many more hours than the Irish Members had done in disputing every stage of the proposal. But he ventured on another ground to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman. He was setting a very awkward precedent, and it was one scarcely respectful to the House. There could be no urgency for the Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman would be well advised in postponing for the present the measure.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he thought, as a matter of public convenience, the right hon. Gentleman would do well to consider that appeal. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not think he would get through one of the Budget Resolutions if he did not accept the proposal for Adjournment. The right hon. Gentleman had brought the matter entirely upon himself. He had said this was simply a formal stage, but hon. Members from Ireland did not consider it as such; and, if he persisted in the course he proposed, he would lose a great deal of time.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 104; Noes 169: Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 61.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the House had, by a large minority, called upon the Government to postpone the further consideration of this matter, but the Government would not accede to the request of that minority. The Irish Members, however, were going to be more reasonable than the Government. They felt they could not regard any stage of the Bill as formal, and they should consider it their duty to oppose the Bill at every stage. In regard to the breathless and eager interest with which the country was looking forward to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition upon the Budget proposals of the Government, and to the grave importance of that matter, they did not intend to persist in offering a protracted opposition to the further progress of the Resolution. So far as the Government was concerned, the Irish Members had the same disregard for their convenience as the Government themselves seemed to have for the convenience of the Irish Members; but, seeing the position in which the Leader of the Opposition was placed by the conduct of the Government, they should not assist the Government in their little game of throwing his speech back into the dinner hour by continuing the debate, but should satisfy themselves by simply taking a Division at this stage.

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes, 184; Noes 109: Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 62.)

Second Resolution *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 201.]

WAYS AND MEANS.—COMMITTEE.

Ways and Means—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Tea.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):

Tea .. .. the pound .. Sixpence."

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Sir, I believe it is entirely understood by the Committee that upon the Resolution which has just been proposed, either the Budget may be discussed as a whole, or any portion of it may be discussed. I have no intention, as there has been an expectation, which I gathered from an expression just used by an hon. Member below the Gangway, that I was about to enter upon a lengthened investigation of the Budget at its present stage—I have no intention, I may say, or hope of satisfying that expectation. It was quite right and in accordance with usage that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should propose his Budget as a whole, and recommend it as a whole to the notice of the Committee. But when I view it, I find that it contains a very great number and a very great diversity of proposals, that it involves a variety of principles and a variety of propositions of which I take different views; approving of some, but not being able to extend that approval to others. I should find it very difficult indeed, nor do I think it would be agreeable to the character of our proceedings, to treat the matter as if we were dealing with the second reading of a Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has embodied in his measure some principles which I think to be of great value. I own I attach the highest importance to any arrangement which promises to put a stop to the continually growing system, and as I think the very faulty system—faulty both in principle and its details—of grants in aid. No Government in particular has been responsible for the growth of that system, although it is certainly true that at certain periods and for special purposes, enormous additions have been made to these grants. But still, on the whole, their extension has been one which has proceeded at a rapid rate during the last 40 years. They scarcely existed before 1846, unless for very special purposes indeed, such as the grant for Education. At that time, there was an enlargement by way of mitigating the severity of the transition—for it was expected that the transition would be severe, although it did not fulfil all the anticipations which were entertained in it—the great transition brought about by the repeal of the Corn Laws. I will not now repeat the arguments made with respect to them, because my purpose simply is to express the great satisfaction with which I contemplate a measure boldly addressed to putting an end to the system, and I must say that I expect, as the result of that, in one point of view, some economy of the public expenditure—that is the stoppage of a special source of waste; and in another point of of view, the restoration of a greater independence of the Local Authorities in the distribution of funds properly local; and, lastly, a most important object, I think, is to be gained, and, I think, will be gained by the propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in clearing the Imperial and the local accounts. Nothing can be worse, I think, than a system under which the expenditure of the country is subjected to factitious augmentation by including in it very large sums intended to go into the local treasury and to be disbursed for local purposes and then be employed in modes which have nothing to do with the public Exchequer or with Imperial purposes. I should be very sorry indeed if anything were to happen that would in any way endanger the fulfilment of this important proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which is vitally associated with the Local Government Bill, which has been introduced and laid before us. Then with respect to the reduction of 1*d.* in the Income Tax, that I hardly consider to be a question upon the disposal of which it is possible for an Opposition or even for independent Members of the House to exercise any serious influence. It is a measure the merit or demerit of which must in the main rest with Her Majesty's Government. I am not aware of any case in which it has happened that a diminution of the Income Tax has been proposed, whether rightly or wrongly, and in which it has either met with successful resistance or even been the subject of serious opposition. I shall, therefore, give an acquiescing vote with respect to the 1*d.* on the Income Tax which it is proposed to reduce; but I do not shut my eyes to the fact that the reduction entails upon us the necessity of providing an effectual substitute for the purpose of preventing a deficiency in the public revenue. With respect to the provision of that substitute, I know it is the fashion to say that that it is the business of the Government to find taxes to meet the wants of the country, and, no doubt, it is especially their business when they are voluntarily, and not under the pressure of Parliament, proposing a reduction of the Income Tax. At the same time I shall feel it to be my duty when the time comes to exercise a free judgment upon the new taxes, whether Imperial or local, which has been proposed by the Administration. But I shall not in so doing forget that they are necessary, either they or something that will stand in their place, for the purpose partly of fulfilling the expectations held out to Local Authorities, and partly for the purpose of meeting the Imperial necessities of the Exchequer. Sir, upon these new taxes themselves I have little to say at the present moment, and that little, I am afraid, is not very encouraging. I observe with considerable prudence and circumspection, at all events as far as the nature of the case admitted, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with a large portion of the new charges—namely with those which are to produce £800,000 a-year in aid of local expenditure as scarcely being fair. I may have misunderstood him; but what I understood him to say, with regard to these new imposts which are to be levied for the benefit of the counties and the towns—"What I have to say to you may be summed up in this *dictum*—Take them or leave them." I did not gather distinctly from the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but I have no doubt he will make it plain to us—either to-night or on some future occasion—what course he intends to take in the event of his failing to persuade the House to adopt any portion of these new charges, such as the Wheel Tax, which are to go in relief of local expenditure. Suppose, for example that the House of Commons should find on going over these charges, such as the Wheel Tax, or the tax upon heavy carriages, that, upon the whole, they are not expedient in the public interest, will the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government think it their duty to fill up the gap caused by the defeat or withdrawal of such taxes for the benefit of the local expenditure? That is a question, undoubtedly, of considerable importance, but one upon which I do not think we have yet had the benefit of as much light as the Government can throw upon it. I have had some experience in doing what the Chancellor of the Exchequer has had to do with respect to the Income Tax—that is, endeavouring to make up by a multitude and variety of small, and, as it is hoped, insensible, imposts a considerable sum, such as he has ingeniously put together, in order to enable him to part with the 1*d.* in the Income Tax. My experience in such cases, I am sorry to say, has been that while the satisfaction at the prospect of relief to the Income Tax was at the first moment apparently the dominant motive, and induced people to take a favourable first view of these particular proposals, yet, when the proposals came to be seriously examined by the light thrown upon them by experts who have practically had to deal with the subjects they effect, it has been found very difficult to obtain the assent of Parliament to such proposals in a variety of cases. I must own that I think it requires a good deal of courage to attempt at the present time of day, unless we are driven to it by a great necessity, to revive and extend the taxes upon locomotion. It has been the great object of this House for a great number of years to reduce or abolish such imposts; and, I think, the working of the proposals which have been made in that sense has, on the whole, proved very satisfactory. I should be sorry to say or do anything which would give to the discussion of this portion of the Budget the smallest tinge of Party politics. What I hold is that the whole of these subjects ought to be discussed in the dry light of experience of public policy, with a complete estrangement, if we can exercise so much control over ourselves, from mere Party or Parliamentary considerations. Therefore, I desire to keep my own mind open and to pronounce no final opinion at the present moment upon any of the new taxes, local or Imperial, which have been proposed, with a single exception, to which I shall come by and by, and which falls in a different category; but to say that I am apprehensive that considerable difficulties may be found to beset the path of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to a variety of these taxes. The particulars of them will be better understood, I think, after they have been discussed by those who are termed practical men, and those who, after consultation with their constituents, have derived information upon their particular bearings, of which a Member of the Opposition is not antecedently to Parliamentary debate always in possession. I shall endeavour to give a fair consideration to the information, and for the present I reserve a liberty of judgment in respect of my final resolution. Well, Sir, I am sorry, I own, that circumstances have brought about a result in this Budget such as I do not previously recollect; but at the same time I am not at the present moment about to make this a matter of blame. With a surplus of £2,250,000, speaking in round numbers, we are about to dispose of funds at our command without doing anything for the relief of the general consumer. I do not remember that there has been any such case before, and I am very sorry that such a case should have arisen. The answer will be, no doubt, that if the wants that have been met on previous occasions have on this occasion been overlooked, on the other hand wants have been met on this occasion for which on previous occasions no provision had been made. That is to say, the great necessity for affording relief to local taxation, by calling on personal property to bear a fair share of it, has absorbed a large portion of the means at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and has crippled him so that he is unable to do anything. All that, Sir, is true; but when I look at that very fact, and when I bear in mind how large a proportion of what we are now giving in relief of rates will, in part, ultimately, and at a very early date, go in relief of the burdens now paid by property. I must come to this conclusion, that joining that fact with the circumstance that nothing is to be granted in respect of relief for articles of general consumption, I must tender this general criticism, that it is a measure too much in favour of property and too little in favour of the general consumer. I will exemplify what I have to say upon that subject by referring rather more particularly to one matter which is of the very utmost weight and importance—namely, the proposal made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with respect to what are now generally known as the Death Duties. The measures of the Government are founded upon an assumption, which I believe in the main to be true, and which, likewise, has again and again received the approval and ratification of this House—namely, that there is a real inequality at present existing, to the great disadvantage both of real and likewise of visible personal property, in respect of the mode in which our local burdens are levied, and we are not innovating really in recognizing that principle by the measure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer now proposes to hand over certain taxes and portions of taxes from the Exchequer to the local spending bodies; because we are really giving effect in this matter to what was an ancient principle of English law. The English law made stock-in-trade in principle liable for the support of the poor, and I suppose I may say that in spirit it may be considered to have constituted a liability for local charges more at large. It will be in the recollection of some connected with Scotland, and now within my hearing, that when the Poor Law was introduced into that country the very same law—namely, the taxation of means and substances without reference to any distinction between realty and personalty, was theoretically in force, and serious endeavours were made by Local Authorities in different parts of the country to bring that law into practical operation. That was found to be impossible, and during the interval which has since elapsed, personalty has gone scot-free. Now, I wish to be assured that I am not wrong in the construction I put upon the Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to give between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000—subject to a reduction of £2,600,000—from the public Exchequer to the local spending bodies. Of course, we must take into view that what he so gives will have to be supplemented by further gifts in respect of Scotland and of Ireland, and that probably the Exchequer will have to be sconced, if I may use the word, or impoverished to an extent of between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000—possibly to the extent of £7,000,000—before we are out of this business, whereas the relief that we shall receive will be a very considerable relief, amounting to a very large sum—I cannot say what, but perhaps £4,000,000 of pure gift from the Imperial to the local treasury. What I want to press is this—let us now make a clean job of this inequality in local taxation as between realty and personalty. We ought to understand that the proposals of the Government are intended to put an end to the complaint which is made on behalf of realty and of visible property in regard to local expenditure. That is the construction of it to which I wish to hold the Government strictly bound. We should make indeed, I think, a very unworkmanlike piece of business if we were to go into that matter to divide the Probate Duty, and make it over, and take the licences and a variety of other taxes, and make these in perpetuity the property of the local spending bodies, and still be liable to the complaint which has been urged from time to time that realty and visible property has a grievance to complain of, and that that grievance has not been met. From this time forward—I mean from the time the plans of the Government are finally adopted and ratified—that grievance, as I hold, will at once and for ever be disposed of. We shall have given to the different descriptions of property, so far as we are able, perfect fair play with respect to local taxation. If that is so, we must then consider what becomes necessary with respect to general taxation—whether there is any gross inequality palpable on the surface, either as between property and labour, or as between the different kinds of property, which it is our duty to satisfy and remove. No doubt, to make that operation complete is hardly the work of a day. To dispose of all the differences of opinion on the question whether personalty pays too much or too little to the State would be beyond any single effort that Parliament could make; and, therefore, I do not consider that the controversy or freedom of opinion upon that subject can be brought into such a condition at once that we shall hear no more of it. But the proposition I am going to lay down, an obvious and a reasonable one, that if there be any gross and palpable inequality in our Imperial taxation as between one kind of property and another, this is the time, when we are removing the grievance between realty and visible property, to ascertain the true and just principle of equality in respect of the taxation of property with a view to the purpose of the State. Now, the principle I have laid down has certainly been recognized in terms by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because, although this portion of his speech was by no means so complete as other portions, or as one could have wished, yet undoubtedly he did appear to recognize that in some sense there must, as a consequence of his measure, be an equalization of what are termed the Death Duties. It is known that a very great inequality prevails as to the Death Duties as between realty and personalty, but it is not entirely known how great the inequality is. The Chancellor of the Exchequer appeared to think that he removed it by the proposition to raise the Succession Duty upon lineals from 1 to 1½ per cent, and on collaterals to make an addition of 1½ per cent to the various rates under the consanguinity scale. Now, this is a very large question, which I shall not attempt to touch at all on the present occasion. There are Gentlemen who would make a clean sweep indeed with respect to the Death Duties, and initiate a very extensive change by the abolition of the consanguinity scale. I must own that long reflection has given me the impression that there is a great deal to be said in favour of the proposition to simplify to the uttermost the question of the Death Duties by the adoption of a single charge, and by the abolition of the consanguinity scale. But though it is the opinion to which I personally lean, it is not the proposition which at present I wish to urge upon the House. It is not a proposal necessary in order to satisfy the principle of public justice, which appears to me to be involved in the equalization of the Death Duties upon landed and personal property. Now, Sir, how do they stand at the present moment? First of all, there is a Probate Duty which is paid entirely by personalty. One-half of that Probate Duty has to go to local purposes—and here I must say that I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has exercised a very sound discretion in making the Probate Duty a divided duty; and treating it as a fund out of which he is going to make large payments for the benefit of realty and visible personalty. I think that is exceedingly right and just, and far better than any attempt to appropriate a portion of the Income Tax to that purpose, which has sometimes been proposed; but I am sorry to say that if my right hon. Friend proposes his present plan in respect to these duties as a plan which is to satisfy the demands of justice and the principle of equalization—from that point of view I regard it as wholly insufficient, and, I must say, even illusory. The Succession Duty is, upon the face of it, small, and when examined it will be found to be a good deal smaller still. The lineal is supposed to pay 1 per cent as Legacy Duty, which is the basis of the present arrangement. There is another inequality between the Legacy Duty and the Succession Duty. The lineal in both cases is supposed to pay the same; but does he pay the same? In the first place, under the Legacy Duty, all personalty pays upon the capital value; under the Succession Duty payment is made upon the life interest alone. Payment on the life interest varies greatly. In the case of an old life succeeding the payment is very light indeed; in the case of a young life it is very much heavier; it goes up, I think, as high as 16 or 17 years' purchase; I am not quite sure whether that is the limit, but I may put it about that. On the whole, the payment of the life interest does not amount to more than half that on the capital value. Various circumstances show that this is not an over-statement, one of them being that realty descends to lineals in a much larger proportion than personalty, and, therefore, obtains a much larger benefit from the artificial arrangement of the consanguinity scale. But there is much more than that—first, the length of time to be allowed for the payment of the duty. I think that, in addition to the payment of ½ per per cent, my right hon. Friend likewise proposes to add to the length of time allowable for payment—in fact, to double it. At present the time averages 4½ years—that is to say, it begins to run at the first rent day, and runs four years from that rent day. Under the new arrangement there will be eight years instead of four. Well, Sir, as everyone knows, it is one thing to offer me a sum down, and another thing to offer me a sum available in 16 instalments—that, in point of fact, it makes a very large deduction from the capital value of what is offered to me. Among the alleviations which we offered in 1853 from the burden of the Succession Duty, which was regarded with a horror and apprehension which are now forgotten, but which I should find it difficult to describe—among those alleviations we introduced this—that, in the event of another death before the tax has been received, the whole of the outstanding payments should be abated. In a sensible proportion of cases it happens that there is more than one succession within four or five years. Where there are two successions within four or five years—suppose, for instance, there is another succession after 15 or 18 months, and only two instalments have been paid under the present law, the other six instalments disappear altogether, and the new possessor comes in scot-free as regards outstanding claims. That was a very serious loss to the Exchequer when the payments reached over four years; but with payments reaching over eight years the loss will be very much greater—much more than double—and the deductions from the net receipts will be a very large one. There are other questions, such as the valuation of timber and what may be called secondary receipts from landed property, with respect to which there is a case given which I think has nothing strictly corresponding to it in the case of personal property. I will not enter into details upon this matter. I can only say that I feel that I have a fixed conviction, although I cannot present a mathematical demonstration, that the 1 per cent levied upon landed property under the Succession Duty Act, which appears to assert the principle of equality against the 1 per cent levied under the Legacy Duty Acts, is, in the first place, reduced to ½ per cent by the principle of taxing only the life interest, and, in the second place, is reduced to ⅓ per cent by the various allowances and alleviations to which I have referred. My right hon. Friend proposes to remove the inequality by raising the duty on lineals to 1½ per cent, and by raising the other duties also. Now this raising of the duty on lineals is really a substitution as far as comparison with the Legacy Duty is concerned; it will be raising 6*s*. 8*d*. to 10*s*., and leaving the payments made by land in the case of lineals 10*s*., as against 20*s*. Legacy Duty. But that leads to a review of the whole question of the Probate Duty upon personal property. I have gone through the case assuming that the Legacy Duty is yielding according to the figures presented to us. I apprehend that, instead of yielding as it does now between £800,000 and £900,000, when the plan is in full operation it will yield something more than £200,000. If we found our statement upon the figures before us, landed property will pay £1,200,000, while at the same time personalty will be paying more than £4,500,000, independently of the payments made in relief of local rates. Deducting that payment from the £4,500,000, £3,250,000 would remain as the inequality between the respective duties upon realty and personalty. Now, Sir, I admit that there is an element in that computation which is open to dispute—that is to say, I have assumed that the total value of landed property passing by death is about the same in total value of personal property passing by death. In estimating the value of landed property passing by death I hope that one essential portion of the reform of the Death Duties, now in prospect, will be the extension of taxation to that portion which is held in mortmain for what are called charitable purposes. That is the basis on which I proceed, for otherwise I should appear to impair my calculation; but with regard to that basis there may be some difference of opinion. I will not, however, enter into any argument now. Assuming the values of the two classes of property passing by death to be somewhere about equal, then the inequality which the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer leaves altogether untouched would be the payment of £3,250,000 per annum on personal property which is not incident on landed property after the local grievance on landed property and visible property has been redressed. From the beginning I have held that this is the main blot, as I must call it, in the proposal of my right hon. Friend. In my view it is not a question of principle. Upon the contrary, I should say, as far as I know the sentiments of those around me, and it is certainly my own sentiment, that I should propose to meet that inequality, not by diminishing the present payments on personalty, but by adding to the present payments on realty. The mode in which the levy can most conveniently be made is, of course, very serious, requiring careful consideration. The principle is inevitable, I think — and its acceptance must come now or at an early date—that the two properties must be taxed equally. Therefore, it may be our duty—and I think it probably will be our duty—to offer the House at the proper time some proposition in favour of equalizing the Death Duties on land and on personal property. We will not make the proposal at the present time, because I am desirous that the Resolution should go forward as speedily as is consistent with full and fair discussion, and that the Taxing Bill should be introduced. But at the proper time it will be our duty to make a proposition in favour of the principle of equalizing these duties. The effect of our proposal will not be, as is commonly the case with proposals proceeding from the Opposition, to impoverish the Public Exchequer, but to pour treasure into the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and so to enable him to dispense with some of the minor taxes he has proposed in case those taxes should be found by the House and by the country, upon full and fair and impartial consideration, to be exceptionally unsatisfactory. I shall not detain the House further upon this occasion. I hope I have not been too long. I should like to hear the proposals with respect to other taxes and the multitude of points with which a Budget of this nature necessarily bristles discussed, as far as possible, from a purely practical point of view. I shall, therefore, leave them, as far as I am concerned, intact. I hope and believe that the House will look at these matters in a practical spirit from first to last; but I certainly have the conviction that with respect to the subject on which I have last touched our first duty on the present occasion is to remove the grievance that exists with regard to local taxation, and that having removed that grievance our second duty is to assert and to give effect to in the best form we can devise that principle of equality in the Death Duties as between landed and personal property.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the Committee will agree with me that it is only due to the respect we all entertain for the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) on these financial questions that, instead of entering into the debate at the close of the evening, I should rise at once to reply to the observations he has made. I must, in the first place, thank my right hon. Friend for the spirit in which he has discussed this matter. While he has criticized some parts of the proposals which the Budget contains, he has, on the other hand, expressed his approval of other parts, and I appreciate most highly the desire of the right hon. Gentleman to exclude as far as possible Party considerations from the discussion of the financial proposals of Her Majesty's Government. I will note in the first instance the points in which my right hon. Friend accepts—if I understand him rightly—our proposals. He considers that we have dealt rightly with the principle of grants in aid. He is in accord with us in substituting the new system which the Local Government Bill contains for the mischievous practice hitherto followed of grants in aid, which he rightly says tend to extravagance and to diminish local responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman is pleased to see the Imperial accounts separated from those of local expenditure, so that the same expenditure is not presented twice over—once in the Imperial and a second time in the Local Budget. My right hon. Friend did not give a warm approval to, but he stated that he should not oppose, the reduction of the Income Tax by 1*d.* I was glad to learn that, and that he was of opinion that the proposal would be regarded with general satisfaction, at all events in the first instance, although he thought it might be different when the new taxes came to be substituted. No man speaks with greater experience on such a point. But with regard to these new taxes, possibly those who are satisfied are silent, while those who may suffer will make themselves extremely prominent. Therefore I do not admit that the number of objections or of letters which appear in the newspapers are conclusive on the subject, or give any indication of the general opinion. We have been enabled, or rather we hope to be able, with the assistance of this House, to reduce the Income Tax by 1*d.* At the same time, we hope to reduce the burden of the rates very considerably in all parts of the Kingdom, both in town and country, and I trust that those who may see some of their payments increased by these new taxes to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded will remember at the same time that they pay less Income Tax and less rates upon their property. Then my right hon. Friend stated that from the great surplus at our disposal the general consumer on this occasion gets no advantage. But I think the right hon. Gentleman by no means wished to press either myself as Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Government too hard upon that point. He recognized that we were in a peculiar position—namely, that we had to fulfil pledges given by Parliament after Parliament that there should be some relief to local taxation. My right hon. Friend has been defeated upon that point in former times, and I myself have been beaten upon it when I was associated with my right hon. Friend. As a matter of fact, successive Parliaments have declared that the time had come when the ratepayers must be relieved. And I entreat the Committee and the public not to be led away by the notion that the whole relief to be given to the ratepayers will be exclusively for the benefit of the owners of real property. My right hon. Friend was perfectly candid on the subject. He admitted that the ratepayers would be relieved at once, but he held that the whole benefit would ultimately go to the owners of property.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I said a very large portion of it.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am obliged to my right hon. Friend for the correction, because I hold myself—and we have often discussed this matter together—that while, no doubt, a portion of the relief will ultimately go the owners, a very large portion will go to the ratepayers themselves. The relief to the ratepayers from the proposals of Her Majesty's Government will be extremely sensible and important. It will reach the largest class of consumers; it will touch one commodity which is used as much as any, and that is the commodity of houses. It is not correct to say that the consumers will not be affected, because if all those who live in houses are benefited by the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, then almost all consumers will be benefited. It will be a wide-spread advantage, some of which will go to the working classes, as well as to the lower and poorer middle class. I believe that the advantage to be given to the ratepayers generally will be diffused—if I may use the term—over society at large. Therefore, it would be unjust to say that in the proposals of Her Majesty's Government the interests of the consumers have been neglected. The class benefited will be very much wider than that which my right hon. Friend seemed to think would derive most advantage from our proposals. Then my right hon. Friend turned to another point—the total of relief which would be given from Imperial general taxation to local burdens; and he put the sum at £4,000,000. He first took the total sum of £7,000,000, then he deducted the contribution to the rates of £2,600,000; and, on the whole, he came to the conclusion that the total gift would be £4,000,000.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: To England?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; but I do not think the total gift would amount to £4,000,000. The total gift to England would be £3,000,000; and the total gift to the United Kingdom under £4,000,000. But the right hon. Gentleman asks us—"Is this to be considered a final settlement?" He asks whether we consider that by these proposals we finally settle the question as between personalty and realty, and as between Imperial and local taxation. Well, so far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned, we consider that by these proposals we have met—and adequately met—the demands of those who have been called the reformers of local taxation. We have got no further plan behind us. Of course, we cannot bind future Parliaments—of course, the right hon. Gentleman understands that—but we have shown our whole hand on this occasion; and I must add, in so doing, we have looked not simply to the amount we have transferred to local taxation, but to the total results of our proposals as regards realty and personalty in general. [Mr. W. E. Gladstone: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman suggests that our proposals as regards Imperial taxation of realty are not final, but only an instalment. I am not prepared to accept that version of our policy. Our proposals must be looked upon as a whole. This is the essence of our proposals—that local taxation and Imperial taxation cannot be regarded separately, but must be treated together. We have laid personal property under substantial contributions to assist local taxation, and we have somewhat raised the amount which realty has to contribute for Imperial purposes. As I have said, we look upon our proposals as a whole. My right hon. Friend proposes to raise the Death Duties on real property for Imperial purposes further than the Government proposes. Of course, that would affect our judgment in relation to the contribution of personalty to local taxation. I do not know whether I have made myself clear on this subject; but I will repeat what I have said, in order that there may be no misunderstanding. We think we have rectified the anomalies in both directions; and if we should be pressed to increase the burdens upon land, houses, or any other great interest, in consequence of some action which might be taken by right hon. Gentlemen, of course, we should have to consider whether the arrangements which we regard as equitable taken together would be equitable if disturbed by such further action. I come now to what I believe is the main argument of my right hon. Friend. He gave his chief attention to the question of the Succession Duty, and he insisted upon the great inequality which will still remain as regards the incidence of the Death Duties upon real property and upon personalty respectively. I have followed my right hon. Friend's argument as closely as I could, and I will very briefly deal with the various points raised by him. He illustrated the various anomalies that will still remain. He admits that, so far as the amount of taxation is concerned, it is now placed upon an equality —that there is 1½ per cent on lineals in the one case and 1½ per cent on lineals in the other—but he says there are certain anomalies, and he suggested that there was a difference amounting to 50 per cent in favour of realty. Now, I have inquired into the average age at which succession takes place in the case of land. That age is 46, and at that age the duty which is paid is upon an amount equal to about 13½ years' purchase. I do not think that that figure has ever before been placed before the public. The average on which Succession Duty is paid in the case of real estate is 13½ years' purchase. There were times when that, perhaps, was only half the value of the property; but hon. Members ought to take into consideration the enormous change that has now taken place in the prospective value of land—a change greatly affecting the number of years' purchase which it is worth. I wish to point out that if at the time when my right hon. Friend himself had to deal with this question he thought it necessary to continue Death Duties which gave some apparent advantages to land, circumstances which have occurred since have strongly increased the claim of land—if land ever had the claim—I will not say to more favourable treatment, but to different treatment from that accorded to personalty. One great point is this—I should think it influenced my right hon. Friend in 1853—

that a man has never the same power, and never can have the same power, of dealing with land as he has of dealing with personal property. He can carry his personalty away; he can sell it and carry the price away to a distant land. But you cannot always sell your land, and you can certainly never carry it away. Those are considerations which appear to have influenced my right hon. Friend in past times, and I think that a certain advantage must still be left to land; but I do not think that that advantage ought to be pressed too far. I have given proof of that by the fact that I have myself proposed that these duties should be placed upon the same footing as regards their amount; but, at the same time, I am of opinion that the difference of conditions attaching to real property and personal property respectively cannot be entirely overlooked. My right hon. Friend assumed—I do not know upon what *data*—that he might regard the value of real estate and the value of personal estate as about equal. He then proceeded to show how much would—under our proposals, be paid by land, namely, £1,200,000, and how much by personal property—namely, about £4,000,000, and he argued that these figures disclosed a grievance, as they showed that the greater burden fell upon personal property. Now, of course, it is of the essence of the right hon. Gentleman's case that the values of the two kinds of estate are equal—that the saleable value of land is equivalent to the saleable value of all personal property. Unless that is so, the whole of my right hon. Friend's argument must fall to the ground. I presume my right hon. Friend will address himself to that point when the proper time comes; but has he borne in mind the extraordinary difference in the relations between realty and personal property at the present day, as compared with their relations 10, 20, and 30 years ago? I have been reminded by certain communications that in 1871 I considered that the burdens on land were not too heavy; but what a change has taken place in the conditions of landed property since then—an enormous change, which cannot be left out of account? I trust that this is an argument which even the right hon. Gentleman opposite will consider to be plausible. If it is true that land has fallen in value, while personal property has been greatly increasing in value, then it is less possible than ever to contend that the landed property in the country is equivalent in value to the personal property. In 1871 lands were assessed, under Schedule A, at £49,000,000; in 1886-7 they were assessed at £45,000,000. Therefore the assessable value of land at the present moment is considerably less than it was. On the other hand, if you take the value of houses alone you find that it stood at £75,000,000 in 1871, and that in 1886-7 it stood at £117,000,000. All I have now to add is this—that we shall be prepared to meet my right hon. Friend, when the proper time comes, in the same spirit in which he has addressed us. With regard to his chief contention, which is that real property ought, under existing circumstances, to contribute more towards Imperial purposes, I can only repeat that we consider our proposals, viewed as a whole, to be as fair as we can make them, having regard to the various interests concerned, and we trust that, as a whole, they will be accepted by the Committee and by the House.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he wished to say a few words in reference to the Budget propositions before the Resolution was passed. He had ventured—after the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in introducing the Budget—to characterize the right hon. Gentleman's proposals as somewhat retrograde, upon which an hon. Member on the opposite side of the House expressed surprise that he (Mr. Picton), as a Radical, should have called "retrograde" proposals which, in accordance with his views, were likely to lighten the burdens of the poor and increase the burdens of the rich. Now there was only one item of charge in the proposals which had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer which was likely to press with anything like exclusiveness upon the rich and luxurious. He referred to the 5*s*. duty upon bottled wine, which was estimated to produce the small sum of £125,000, and even as to that the exclusiveness of the pressure would disappear owing to the reduction of 1*d*. in the Income Tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to give an assurance that all those who had incomes of £2,000 or £1,000 a-year might go on drinking a quart or a pint of champagne per day without incurring any additional expenditure whatever. He should endeavour to show that this was the only attempt which was made to shift the burden of taxation from the poor to those who were better able to bear it. The Horse Duty would press, as had already been shown, very heavily upon country doctors, country clergymen, and poor professional men of various sorts. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised to consider some of these grievances, and had further said that he thought he could see his way to afford partial relief. The right hon. Gentleman, however, would find it very difficult to spread that relief equally. A very large number of comparatively poor people had retired on their savings—including a considerable number of half-pay officers in the Army and Navy—in various parts of the country, at a distance from railway stations, and such persons might require to keep a horse, and the duty would press with great heaviness upon them. Then the revenue from stamps was to be increased in various directions, as, for instance, in regard to legal documents now practically free from them, and also certain bonds and contract notes. The proposals were simply a new mode of taxing business transactions. They would increase the friction in regard to many processes of business and create a great deal of annoyance. There were a large number of thrifty people who had saved a little money by the time they had reached 50 or 60 years of age, and who were anxious to make prudent investments, yet all the operations by which such investments could be made were to be increasingly taxed by the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, notwithstanding the fact that they would involve a large number of widows and aged people who were ill able to bear the burden. He had received a communication on the subject from a certain firm of stock and share brokers who were among his own constituents. After referring to the contribution they made to the Exchequer by the enormously large number of telegrams they had to send, they went on to say that the 6*d.* stamp upon contract notes, in addition to other burdens, was more than their clients would bear. They added that they had many transactions of £100 which was the sum taxed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as that which should be required to pay the 6*d.* stamp on contract notes. In addition a sum of 2*s.* 6*d.* had to be paid upon foreign bonds; and, adding to these expenses and the telegraph charges a 6*d.* stamp on contract notes, it would leave them very little or nothing for their time and services. This firm also stated that there were a large number of other contracts entered into among the dealers and owners in connection with the woollen, yarn, and leather trades which now paid nothing, though they might be taxed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer hereafter. To take 1*d.* off the Income Tax was at first sight a popular measure; but was it right to relieve incomes by imposing on the commercial community harassing burdens such as this 6*d.* stamp on contract notes? And, no doubt, the decrease in the Income Tax was that part of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals which had been most eagerly welcomed by a large portion of the public, and especially by that class of the community on whom the burden pressed most heavily. He never expected to see that tax removed altogether; but he thought it might, by a sounder system of taxation, be much relieved. The experience of Sir Robert Peel's measures, and likewise the Budgets of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), had shown that the payers of Income Tax might often derive great advantage from the leverage they got from this tax to set free various articles of trade, so that their incomes lost nothing by the operation, but rather gained as a whole. He might be told that the 1*d.* of the Income Tax would enable men to enjoy more champagne. There were, however, many men who did not want it, but who did wish to make an investment of their savings. To such persons the imposition of the 6*d.* stamp upon contract notes would be a grievance. Let him take the case of the doctor and clergyman with an income of £500 a-year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer took off 1*d.* from their Income Tax by which they gained a little more than £2 a-year; but if the doctor or clergyman lived in the country and was obliged to keep a horse, half of it went off upon the horse at once; and if he kept a substantial gig, he had to pay 5*s*. for the two wheels. Then, if he desired to invest his savings, certainly more than the remaining 15*s*. would go in Stamp Duty. Indeed, he would find it not only more profitable, but that it would give him less worry, to pay £2 on his income and have his business transactions left free. So far he maintained that there was no special consideration whatever for the burdened classes, and he thought he was justified in calling the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer retrograde, seeing that the Cart and Wheel Tax took them back to the old turnpike system, which proceeded upon the erroneous principle that those who used the roads should pay more than those who did not, or who used them less. But that position assumed that roads were made in the private interest of those who kept carts or waggons. A Professor of Political Economy once said in the course of a lecture—"Civilization, gentlemen, means, in one word, roads." But civilization was not for traders only. The Roman Empire was distinguished quite as much by the perfection of its roads as by the discipline of its Army and the enterprize of its statesmen. Roads were made, not because they facilitated the gains of any one particular class, but because the whole community required them. They were undoubtedly a convenience to the butcher, to the baker, to the carrier, all of whom sent out their goods in carts. It was a convenience to them to have a good road to travel upon; but it was equally convenient to the buyer to have his goods sent cheaply and quickly. This attempt to apportion the burden of keeping up the roads was contrary to the whole social system of modern times, which, as regarded all such matters as lighting, paving, and even of elementary education, insisted that all should pay according to their means and should take according to their needs. He contended that this retrograde proposal was aggravated by the exemption of farmers. Why should farmers be exempted when they used the roads as well as other people? A gentleman with whom he had conversed in Liverpool—a coal merchant not in a very large way of business—assured him he would have to pay an additional £37 of taxation in consequence of this imposition on horses and wheels. A carter who conveyed coal from a railway station would have to pay the Wheel Tax; but the farmer using the same road for the same purpose was charged nothing whatever. It was the old system of Protection. A trade that could not bear the ordinary burdens of citizenship had no right to exist at all. If agriculture could not be carried on profitably it was badly managed, or else it was enslaved by old traditions and hampered by old customs which made profit impossible. Whether they imposed taxation on the rivals of the farmers at the seaports, or whether they relieved farmers from the taxes that were paid by their own fellow-countrymen, in either case they resorted to Protection. He contended that agriculture would never prosper so long as it sued *in formâ pauperis*. The farmers ought to assume far more independence than they did. They ought to make common cause with their labouring brethren in all other industries to lift the burdens of taxation from the shoulders of the traders and the toilers, and put it upon accumulated wealth. The farmers should go in for a system of tenant right, for entire freedom in conducting their business apart altogether from the dictation of landlords. They would make far more profit by such a policy as that than by continually begging for doles that were not shared by their fellow-citizens. As long as the land was allowed to be a pasture for vermin to serve as sport for landlords, as long as fences and fields were ruined by the galloping of hordes of red-coated barbarians, farmers could not expect to have their full share of prosperity. The Welsh farmers were showing much more sense. They were insisting that the tithe which came from the land ought to be devoted to secular purposes. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proposed to apply the tithe throughout England and Wales to the relief of the burdened multitude he would have found it a much better plan than any attempt to place taxes on wheels. But if the positive policy of the right hon. Gentleman was retrograde his negative policy was stolidly and despairingly Conservative. The right hon. Gentleman had refused to follow the line of financial progress which had hitherto brought us prosperity. He made no attempt to relieve the working classes by cheapening their food and so enabling them to compete on better terms with their foreign brethren. He (Mr. Picton) had hoped better things from the right hon. Gentleman in view of the speeches which he had delivered in bye-gone days. In 1885, speaking at Haddington, he said—

> "I am one of those who believe that whatever happens this country must stand without any hesitation and without any qualification by the doctrines which made food cheap and which make all the first necessaries of life cheap to the consumer."

In the course of the same speech the right hon. Gentleman remarked that the mind of Lord Salisbury was a mysterious mind, and said that he had not got the key to it. He had found the key to it now, but it was to be feared that he had lost the key to his own mind. Speaking at Glasgow the next day the Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "There is one way in which we have increased, and I trust we shall continue to increase, the resources of the poor; it is by enabling every shilling earned to command a greater amount of necessaries in the market. The Liberal Party have for many years steadily kept one object in sight; they have endeavoured to make sure that the earnings of the working man should go as far as absolute liberty of purchase would make it possible for them to go. But we must not be content with what has been done. I entirely agree with those who say that the statesmen of the present day have no right simply to appeal to the services of those who have gone before. Forward we must go."

But the right hon. Gentleman had not gone forward: he said that the relief of local taxation would lower the rates, and that the working men living in small houses would feel the advantage of it. He (Mr. Picton) very greatly doubted that. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not sufficiently estimated the fierce competition there was amongst the poor for a place to lay their heads in. It was quite a common thing for them to pay a fifth of their income in rent, and oftentimes a considerably larger proportion. The fact was that the landlord or middleman took as much as the tenant could pay, and he (Mr. Picton) did not believe that one penny of relief would ever reach the pockets of the poor people who lived in those small tenements. He remembered a case in an outlying district in which, when a few pence were laid on the school board rate, the landlord of a number of cottages went to the tenants and assured them he would have to charge them 6*d.* extra rent because of the increase in the rate. He (Mr. Picton) had never heard that when rates were lowered rents were lowered in accordance therewith. In the case of small tenements the rates were usually paid in the rent, and it was his strong opinion that the landlords would keep the decrease in the rates in their pockets. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said they ought to be taught by the progress made through Liberal measures in past times. The right hon. Gentleman had had some important lessons in that respect from a great master. He (Mr. Picton) remembered a passage uttered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in 1864, which bore very strictly upon this subject. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "How many of the labouring classes are struggling manfully, but with difficulty, to maintain themselves in a position above that of paupers;"

and again—

> "What is human life, but in the great majority of cases a struggle for existence, and if the means of carrying on that struggle are somewhat better than they were, yet the standard of needs rises with the standard of means, and sometimes much more rapidly, and it does not follow that because you have made additions to the means of subsistence and the comfort of the people, you can safely cease to care for the supply of other wants which demand your consideration."

That was true. The necessities of life necessarily multiplied as civilization increased, and the Budget ought to keep that in mind, and as soon as possible all taxes ought to be removed from the necessaries of life, so as to enable the prudent and sober man with from £60 to £100 a-year to live without paying any taxes at all, directly or indirectly, in time of peace. He did not complain of the Customs and Excise Duties on intoxicating liquors; but if a poor man chose to abstain from such things he ought to be able to live tax free except when some great danger arose to the country which compelled the imposition of extra burdens upon all. Now, what did the right hon. Gentleman do in the direction of relieving the poor in this way? If he had abolished or even lessened the duties on tea, on coffee, and on cocoa, and recouped himself by a 5 per cent Succession Duty, by a heavier Probate and Legacy Duty on great fortunes, he would have been following the lines of progress. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke with exultation of a cheque of £90,000 received from a great fortune of £3,000,000 which had been left. £90,000 on £3,000,000! He ought to have had £500,000 on such fortunes as those. He (Mr. Picton) would protect thrift and industry, but it could do nobody any good, and it could do no community any good, to pile up such enormous masses of wealth for the demoralization of descendants. [*Laughter.*] Gentlemen might laugh now, but he assured them in due time these would come to be regarded as commonplaces. Mr. Mill, in the second volume of his *Political Economy*, told them it was not fortunes which were earned, but fortunes which were unearned, that it was for the public good to place under restraint. The very reverse was done by this Budget. The miserable ½ per cent added to the Succession Duty was no answer whatever to the complaints that he made. They were told over and over again that the burdens on land were so grievous; but was this really the case? In 1870-71 the present Chancellor of the Exchequer himself pointed out that while local rates had increased 100 per cent the value of real property had increased 150 per cent. He then showed that real property contributed only one-third of all taxation put together, local and Imperial, and as to Imperial taxation he came to the conclusion that the circumstances of England were quite abnormal—that there were infinitely less demands made on that description of property in England than in the rest of Europe. Now they were told that circumstances had changed. He was not sure that they had quite changed in the degree or in the mode the right hon. Gentleman suggested to them. Agriculture certainly had decayed, but agriculture would never prosper by being coddled and protected. The increase of rates still continued to be the greatest in towns, and if they compared the progress in the value of real property on the whole, including houses, with the progress made by business, they would find that the advantage was not on the side of business. He found from the latest *Statistical Abstract* that the gross estimated rental of property assessed to poor rate in England and Wales in 1872 was £129,000,000 sterling; in 1886 it was £175,000,000, an increase of about 37 per cent. The commercial exports and imports for the same period told a very different story. In 1872 the value amounted to £669,000,000, and in 1886 it was £618,000,000, a decrease of £51,000,000 or 7½ per cent. Marriages in England which were supposed to be indicative of the prosperity of the country numbered in 1872 254,000, as compared with 241,000 in 1886, a decrease of 5 per cent. He did not think, therefore, that it was true that real property had so much decreased in value compared with the profits of business that the House would be justified in burdening business for the sake of real property. When, the other night, he (Mr. Picton) referred to the Budgets of bye-gone days, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer very generously as well as justly said that no man might hope to rival the splendid achievements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). But it was not the brilliancy of those Budgets nor the eloquence of the speeches with which they were introduced that made those Budgets an epoch in the history of the country. Those Budgets in the good old times of Liberal faithfulness were not merely monuments of financial genius. They heralded a new era of finance. They had been called prosperity Budgets. Were they the cause or the consequence of prosperity? In part he thought they were the cause, the cause only in the sense that the opening of the flood gates was the cause of the advance of the tide into the dock. If they removed all the harassing burdens upon trade they would let in prosperity. The Budgets of old freed industry and enterprize; they abolished or reduced the duties on hundreds of articles consumed by the million; they confirmed our position as the emporium of the world. It was a very different policy which was now inaugurated. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was afraid of too much simplicity being introduced into our finance. Why? Because he thought the poor labourers might altogether escape what he thought their just burdens. He (Mr. Picton) was never afraid that the working man would decline to pay what was just. He believed that if dangers to the country justified an imposition of taxation even upon labour the working classes would not shrink from it. But as long as no such dangers arose, and a wise policy would always keep clear of them, he could not see why there should not be a certain amount of industrial income altogether free from taxation. Therefore, he most earnestly regretted that no attempt had been made to abolish the taxes on tea, coffee, and other temperance drinks; and he trusted that, notwithstanding the discouragement they received at the present time, the day would come when no Budget could be considered satisfactory which did not leave the poor man's breakfast table entirely free of all taxation.

Mr. ELTON (Somerset, Wellington) said, the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) had apparently not followed with very much attention the long debate which had gone on for so many years on the subject of the relief of local taxation when the time came for the reform of local administration. If he had done so, he would have been more familiar, perhaps, with the spirit of the speech which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) delivered in 1883, and in which the right hon. Gentleman prepared the way for the financial changes which had now been introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Mr. Elton) desired to make a few remarks from another point of view, and that was from the point of view of a person interested in land and professionally concerned with land; but, before doing so, he desired to say a few words by way of congratulating the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the clear and admirable manner in which he had laid the proposals of his most intricate Budget before the House. He rejoiced that the right hon. Gentleman should be proposing a Budget of this kind on an occasion which had been awaited for so many years. In season, and, perhaps, out of season, men had been insisting upon some relief being given to local taxation. Now the moment had arrived, and he quite admitted the justice of the principle which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian so long insisted upon—namely, that reform must accompany relief. The time for reform had come, with the common consent of all; and, besides that, an opportunity was afforded of setting the proper limits of local and Imperial taxation. Whether they had been exactly settled might be a matter for difference of opinion. There was no doubt that the relief which could be afforded to local taxation was restricted by certain defined limitations. The first and foremost was that the system of subvention must go. No one knew better than the country gentlemen that the system of subvention was a system of stop-gap which it was necessary to keep up in part even this year, when they were all agreed that subventions were bad in principle. The reason why they were bad had been fully pointed out. He admitted, on behalf of those for whom he spoke, that the reason why the system of subventions was bad was because it pressed so largely on the payments made by the labouring classes. He supposed that every relief of local taxation must, to some extent, be a slight imposition on labour or the results of labour; but, of course, if they took away the burden from the ratepayer they put it on the taxpayer, and either they put it, which they ought to avoid doing, on the labouring class, or on realized property, which was personal property realized in most cases from labour. It had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that in choosing realized personalty as the fund from which the relief must come the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone on the right course. The least harm could assuredly be done when they touched the Probate Duty on realized property. The second limitation, of course, must be that the Income Tax must necessarily be relieved at the same time that they relieved local taxation; because one very good reason was that the Income Tax had been at such an outrageously high figure. It was quite obvious that if there were £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 sterling going it would be absurd to say that the Income Tax payers should have nothing; and if they were to have anything, they could not be offered anything less than the remission of 1*d*. in the pound. It was a custom which had become the established usage for the Income Tax to go up or down by 1*d*. The remission of 1*d*. off the Income Tax made £1,500,000 difference, which had to be found before they could relieve local taxation. Let them see what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done for them in the matter of the relief of rates, in which the people in the country districts were greatly interested. The right hon. Gentleman had determined that if relief was to be given at all it should not be an illusory, but a substantial relief. Of course, they had all heard of the doctrine of hereditary burdens, about which there might be something said that evening; at any rate, they knew that some of the rates were very old and long standing—some of them might go back to the beginning of our recorded history, and some of the old taxes stood on a somewhat different footing to the new rates which had been imposed within the last 15 or 20 years. Besides that they had had the mortification, during the last 15 or 20 years, of feeling that everybody had admitted that personalty ought to be bearing part of the burdens in counties, while, at the same time, it was pointed out that the way could not be seen of bringing that about. All the time that the rates were increasing during the last half-generation it was admitted that personalty ought to bear some part of the local burdens. The sum at which the rates that had been added in the last 15 or 20 years had been put was about £10,000,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them to understand that, at any rate, he would not think of giving them more than a substantial part of that modern increase on the rates, which was the increase of which they had hitherto most complained. He had fixed the relief to be given at an amount corresponding to 2*d.* on the Income Tax, or at about £3,000,000. That was a substantial relief. He (Mr. Elton) thought they ought not now, after what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, to go further into what he should certainly think would be interesting to both sides of the House, the discussion which must take place upon the comparative incidence of taxation upon real and personal property. Their opinion might be—and he thought it was—that realty felt it most. The Succession Duties might have some of the anomalies the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had pointed out; but, on the other hand, the Succession Duty was a tax which pressed with uncommon severity on the person who had to pay it. However, he would not pursue that topic; he would only say that it was very likely that it would turn out that realty paid in direct taxation nearly or about as much as personalty. He recognized with gratitude that what the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to give them was a gift of £3,000,000, or if they did what was perhaps more sensible—namely, discard the stop-gap system altogether for the moment—it was a gift in aid of local taxation of £5,600,000 a-year. It was certain there must be taxation before they could, on the one hand, relieve the Income Tax payer, and, on the other hand, give this substantial relief to the town and country ratepayer. He supposed it was a proper financial method that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had adopted—namely, to tax on both sides. The right hon. Gentleman had given taxes towards local payments, and he had imposed new taxes on the Imperial side. He gave in local relief half of the Probate Duty, and imposed the Wheel Tax, about which they would hear more than they desired. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not mean to say that the arguments they would hear would be convincing, but that they would probably be reiterated. The half of the Probate Duty from realized personalty would go towards the relief of the poor, which was strictly Constitutional by an analogy of the Statute of Elizabeth; the wheel and horse money would go towards the maintenance of the roads. It was difficult for the country to carry three Budgets in their heads; there was a permanent Budget, and a provisional Budget. The permanent one could not be exactly defined, but only sketched out—it depended upon what was received in the coming year. He could not help thinking that the new taxes upon stamps and on bottled wines would be extremely good taxes, and, what was more, extremely popular, especially the Champagne Tax. The country had on many occasions pronounced that it would be a popular tax, and one very great proof of this popularity was the fact that the wine merchants had rushed in and urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to extend the tax so as to include bottled spirits. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take the offer of a tax upon bottled spirits, which was so freely offered him. The next year's income was computed to some extent, but if there were no windfalls and no new taxes there was going to be on the Budget £1,000,000 short. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not tell them how he would raise that £1,000,000, but he had told them how he would not raise it, and that ought to content those who were afraid that labour would be touched. He had declared he would not raise it out of the Income Tax, or by taxes upon labour. There would be complaints as to the mode of distributing the benefits they had gained. He was sure they would hear a great deal about the justice of giving to the boroughs more in proportion than was given to the rural districts. It was said that boroughs had contributed far more to the rates than country districts did; but, on the other hand, they knew that the boroughs, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out, got their *quid pro quo*, and the rural districts could not afford to pay for the pleasure of the towns. He did not think the proposal as to the payment being settled by the numbers of indoor poor would be popular in the country; indeed, he knew it would be extremely unpopular. It appeared to be by a side wind putting an end to the system of giving outdoor relief where houses were cheap, and where the population was not crowded. If the object of the Government was to check the giving of outdoor relief, it would be better to do it by direct legislation than by the indirect method of varying grants with the numbers of indoor paupers. Complaints were made of the taxes on locomotion, and they had probably not heard the last of the points which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would reconsider. No doubt a multitude of complaints had reached the right hon. Gentleman. He had spoken of some of them, and had said he would give them his candid consideration. He (Mr. Elton) hoped that in some respects the right hon. Gentleman would be able to alleviate the burden of the Wheel Tax on the poorer classes, somewhat after the principle of the exemptions from the Income Tax. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman had made his estimate very carefully; but, nevertheless, he might be able to grant exemptions to meet the case, for instance, of those who were obliged to keep spare vans for a press of business. He thought that people who had to keep vans for occasional trade ought to be allowed to compound like horse dealers. Of course, they knew that the tax on heavy traffic would fall, in the timber trade, on the growers of trees, and in the case of the Railway Companies on the dividends of the shareholders. Furniture removers would put a slight increase on the charge for removing furniture, unless they considered it so abnormally high already that, perhaps, they had better throw the tax in as a boon to their customers. He thanked the Committee for having allowed him to make these observations. He thought the local Budget and the provisional and permanent Budgets would give great satisfaction. They not only fulfilled the promise of many years in relieving land from the cruel burden which had laid so long upon it, and coming upon personalty in accordance with strict Constitutional usage, but it put the whole subject of the incidence of local and Imperial taxation in the surest possible train for settlement.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) said, he desired to add a word in praise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the great ability he displayed in the introduction of his Budget. He understood that the different proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would be debated at greater length upon a subsequent occasion, and, therefore, he would not trespass long upon the time of the Committee. The Budget was remarkably clear on many points; but there were one or two matters he did not understand. First of all, he did not understand how the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to pay off £3,200,000 at present borrowed in respect of the Suez Canal Shares; and he did not understand by what process the right hon. Gentleman was going to mix up the Imperial and Local Budgets. Last year the thing he particularly admired in the Budget was the clear way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that in the future there would be no mixing up of local and Imperial finances; but he could not see, from what the right hon. Gentleman had said, how he could avoid mixing them up in the future. It was proposed that 1*d.* should be taken off the Income Tax. He supposed there was no more unpopular tax, and they were all more or less delighted when they heard of any remission of it. Of the new taxes proposed to be raised he would refer first to that on foreign securities. At the present time if any person invested money in enterprizes in this country he was taxed ½ per cent; but if he invested anything in enterprizes in foreign countries he was taxed nothing at all. There was, no doubt, very great unfairness there. Why we should supply other countries with capital which paid nothing to us, and charge capital invested in this country, was one of the things which he had never been able to understand. He regarded the tax of ½ per cent upon investments in this country as nothing more than a tax on industry, though so long as we taxed capital invested at home, we should, in common fairness, tax it when invested abroad; but the process by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to tax foreign securities would not give him a large return. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had means of information which were not open to very many Members of the House; nevertheless, there were a few hon. Members who had spent all their lives on the Stock Exchange, and who would correct him if he was wrong, when he said the tax would not have the effect the right hon. Gentleman imagined it would have. At the present time most of the foreign securities—American Railway Stock, for instance—stood in the names of dealers in London. The proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have the effect of confirming that practice, to which he (Mr. Provand) thought no encouragement ought to be given. There were a great many people in the country who did not receive their dividends at this moment, and who would be more likely to lose them if the proposal were adopted. Again, the 1*s.* per cent was nothing like fair. He had asked several Stock Exchange men how many transactions there were for every one which was actually carried through? Some men said there were 20, while others said there were 50. Let them take the number at 30. If they adopted a small *ad valorem* rate of, say, 4*d.* per cent, and if 30 were the average number of transactions for each one which went through, they would get on foreign shares the same percentage they got on shares belonging to this country. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would change the method in which the new tax was to be levied. The other Stamp Tax on brokers' contracts would fall on the public, because the brokers said they would not pay the 6*d.* They did not charge their customers the 1*d.* at present, but they said they would charge them the 6*d.* The tax on the issue of Companies would be, when the Company was a genuine one, a tax on industry. When the Company was not a genuine one, the tax would be a very good thing. He did not suppose there would be any great objection to the imposition. As to the tax on bottled wines, he really thought the right hon. Gentleman had been dealing with the Fair Traders. It appeared to him that this was a proposal just after the Fair Trader's heart. It was quite true, to a certain extent, that the tax was one upon a luxury. But the man who bought expensive champagnes would only pay 5 per cent, while the man who bought cheap sparkling wines would pay 20 and 25 per cent. The incidence of the tax would be altogether unfair. The bottling business in this country would be nursed until it was larger than at present, and some future Chancellor of the Exchequer would wipe the tax away, and then there would be great complaint from a suffering industry. The same thing had happened before, and in this case it would happen again. The tax was diametrically opposed to the principles of Free Trade. He did not speak of Protection; there was no question of Protection involved, because we made no wine in this country. The tax would affect Germany as well as France, and would, to a large extent, shut out their cheaper wines from our market. It would benefit the wines of Spain and Portugal, which we imported in wood. Besides, the tax being inequitable as between the buyers of the different qualities of wine, it would have an injurious effect upon our export trade. We only exported manufactured goods, and if we checked the purchasing power of other countries we should export so much less, and in that way we should do direct damage to our industrial enterprize. The Horse Tax was the re-imposition of an old tax. He was sorry it had been revived. It was given up before on account of the difficulty in collecting it. Besides, it was another tax on industry. Horse breeding was an industry. It was, in some respects, a decaying industry; and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to assist it, decided last year to cease giving money as Queen's Plates to be run for, so that the money might be devoted to the encouragement of horse breeding. He thought this tax a most unwise one; and here, again, the right hon. Gentleman was providing material for some future Chancellor of the Exchequer to work upon, because some future Chancellor of the Exchequer was sure to take off this tax for the same reasons as it was taken off in 1874. Then there was the Wheel Tax and the Waggon Tax, of which they heard a great deal from those interested in agriculture and other industries. It was in reality a tax upon tools, and if the van and the cart was to be taxed he saw no reason why they should stop there, and why they should not tax the carpenter's axe or his saw. In many cases a workman could not do his work without these things. Some of the carts used for the purpose of obtaining a livelihood were of such a size that even the 2 cwt. limit would affect them. There were many costermongers' carts which were more than 2 cwt. In this matter the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have looked for microscopic sources of revenue; and here, again, he had provided work for some future Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in the meantime for the Civil servants of this country. The right hon. Gentleman himself had last year regretted how impossible it was to keep down the expenses of the Civil Service, for the reason that others, and not himself, were creating more employment for these servants every year. He (Mr. Provand), however, did not think the right hon. Gentleman would be able to say that after this Budget, for he imagined that it would take a small army of overlookers, surveyors, collectors, and others to keep the accounts and to collect the money which he would raise from so many small sources in order to enable him to remit this 1*d*. in the Income Tax. There were some points in connection with the Wheel Tax with regard to which the right hon. Gentleman had given them no particulars whatever. The hon. and learned Gentleman who last spoke (Mr. Elton) said he should like to see an allowance made to those persons who kept several waggons. Well, he (Mr. Provand) knew that it was the practice of certain waggon builders to lend waggons to their customers whilst they were mending old ones, and yet no allowance was to be made in respect of these people. A concession had been made in favour of job masters in connection with the Carriage Tax, and therefore it was to be hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would agree that some similar concession was required in connection with the Wheel and Waggon Tax. He had intended to touch upon the Succession Duty as a means of raising fresh revenue; but after the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian on that point there was little left to be said about it; but, in looking around for fresh means of meeting his expenditure, he (Mr. Provand) was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had lost the opportunity of dealing with the Death Duties. The right hon. Gentleman could not get the credit of doing that now, although it had been a cry in this country for many years, and had been discussed over and over again in the House. It was considered one of those points which any Chancellor of the Exchequer having Liberal ideas still remaining to him would take advantage of—and he would credit the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer with having a great many Liberal ideas still remaining—and, equipped as the right hon. Gentleman was to deal with a question of this kind, having lost his opportunity, he (Mr. Provand) regretted it very much for the right hon. Gentleman's own sake. To-night the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that the average age they had to deal with in connection with the Death Duties was 46, and the average number of years' valuation 13½. Well, three men died last year, leaving about £12,000,000 of personalty. If that had been realty instead of personalty, the Exchequer would not have received one-fifth the amount of money it had received; if he (Mr. Provand) was wrong in this, he should be very glad to be corrected. He believed that the amount received from these estates was four or five times more than would have been received if the £12,000,000 had been realty instead of personalty. There were no taxes at the present moment in this country so unfair as the Death Duties. There were no taxes looked upon as so iniquitous by the people generally, and the right hon. Gentleman, he maintained, had lost a magnificent opportunity of rectifying their inequalities. Then there were one or two other means by which the right hon. Gentleman might have raised his money very easily. It would take a long time to go over these in detail, and he would content himself with drawing the right hon. Gentleman's attention to one of them, dealt with in 1885 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day,—namely, the right hon. Gentleman the present Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). That right hon. Gentleman had proposed a small extra duty on beer. The whole brewing interest rose up on both sides of the House, and were supported by people outside, and it was alleged that if the proposal were carried out the consumers would have to pay an appreciable increase for their glasses of beer. Such assertions were made inside, and repeated outside, the House; but they were entirely without foundation. In less than a year afterwards Guinness's Brewery was turned into a Company, and the facts which then came to light showed that the statements which had been made on behalf of the beer interest were altogether untrue. There was every evidence that the profits from brewing were enormous, and that a small additional tax upon brewers could be adopted without raising the price of beer to the consumer. An extra tax of 1*s.* a-barrel would realize something like £1,500,000, and would not cost the public anything for collecting it, as the same agency which collected the Beer Tax now would be able to collect the new tax. If the right hon. Gentleman had adopted this duty, he would have had at once a means of remitting 1*d.* in the Income Tax, and would have had nothing to pay on the other side. No doubt, right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were reluctant to try the fidelity of their friends the brewers and licensed victuallers; but they might be perfectly sure that something of this kind would be proposed and would come some time or other. This was another opportunity which the right hon. Gentleman had missed to deal with a duty of this description, and he (Mr. Provand) thought the right hon. Gentleman might have saved himself all the microscopic examination of resources which he had had to go through in order to obtain revenue to enable him to remit 1*d.* on the Income Tax—a remission which he proposed for no other reason than to make acceptable a Budget which, on other grounds, would not have been acceptable to the country. As he had said, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman had many Liberal principles still left, though he happened to sit on the other side of the House; but he did not give any indication of such in this Budget. He (Mr. Provand) had been particularly struck by this whilst the right hon. Gentleman was speaking on the introduction of the Budget. The right hon. Gentleman read a small paragraph towards the end of his speech, being very careful not to make a mistake in the matter when laying down the principles by which he said we should be governed when raising more money than was wanted for present purposes. He was certain that the principles the right hon. Gentleman laid down, with one small exception, about stamps, were those which he (Mr. Provand) hoped every future Chancellor of the Exchequer would adhere to; and he would read them three or four lines, to show how exactly and carefully the right hon. Gentleman stated at the end of his Budget Speech how money ought to be raised. The right hon. Gentleman said he wished to lay down certain propositions with regard to the way in which, if necessary, the sum with which he was dealing ought to be met, and these were his words. He said—

> "I will state it in the strongest way negatively. It must not be met by any increase of duties which rest upon the industrial classes. It must not be met by any duties resting upon the earnings of the mass of the people. It must not be derived from duties contributed by professional men, by, industry and by skill. But it must be met by duties on property, or the result of property, or from that promising item of stamps."

He (Mr. Provand) quite agreed with those proposals, and the right hon. Gentleman had had in this Budget an opportunity of securing a great deal of popularity in that way—popularity, however, which it was be regretted he had not taken means to secure. With regard to the Tea Duties, he thought the right hon. Gentleman was very hard upon China. In that country our imports were taxed only to the extent of 5 per cent, and it took a great many of them; and we, on the other hand, taxed the chief import of China into this country over 60 per cent, and took less of it every year. The tea importation from China was a declining industry; and yet, by means of this heavy tax, we were assisting in keeping it out of the country, in this way forcing our people to use Indian tea. The tea we received from China was of a much more delicate character, and was also, in many respects, much cheaper; but the right hon. Gentleman had lost an opportunity of doing justice in this matter, and still allowed that country, which treated us with such fairness, to be hardly dealt with. The tax on Indian tea was in effect only two-thirds of that on Chinese tea, and India was our own. If we were obliged to tax Indian tea, that was our own affair; but we had no right to impose an outrageous tax on this import from a country which consumed a great and increasing quantity of our manufactured goods every year. The Budget seemed to him (Mr. Provand) to be a very small one. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to him to have been anxious to secure a little popularity by taking a 1*d.* off the Income Tax, although to do this he had to devise a number of small petty taxes, which would furnish some future Chancellor of the Exchequer with material to operate upon in the direction of reduction, and the immediate effect of which would be to render necessary the employment of more clerks and collectors and superintendents throughout the country on account of the unfair incidence of such taxes as the Wheel Tax and the Horse Tax. Altogether, he (Mr. Provand) regretted very much that when the right hon. Gentleman had had an opportunity of presenting them with a Budget which should have been a real genuine monument of his financial skill, he had only introduced a series of proposals which would harass various interests, and which, with all the advantages which the right hon. Gentleman claimed for them, would only be remembered to his disadvantage.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, he did not propose to follow the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down over the vast range of subjects which he had dealt with in criticizing the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Still, he ventured to predict this, that the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman would stand out as a brilliant effort of financial genius, and that history would by no means take the desponding and depreciatory view of it which had been adopted by the hon. Gentleman. Now, his (Sir Richard Paget's) object in rising was to say a few words with regard to the very important speech which had been made this evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). That speech was important in that it indicated to the right hon. Gentleman's followers the line of policy which was evidently intended to be adopted by the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the financial proposals of Her Majesty's Government. The line of policy indicated was very evident—first, it would be to deprecate what the right hon. Gentleman called the taxes on locomotion—to endeavour to establish that they were unpopular, and to endeavour to increase their unpopularity. He (Sir Richard Paget) had understood the right hon. Gentleman to give reasons why there should not be any increase of taxation on locomotion, and to assert that every kind of taxation in that direction was taxation in a wrong direction. Now, he should have liked the right hon. Gentleman to have been present to hear him (Sir Richard Paget) explain the change which had come over the right hon. Gentleman's mind with reference to this matter, for it was only so late as the Budget of 1882 that the right hon. Gentleman had said that it was, after all, a grievance that the roads were used and worn by carriages, and that it might be right to make a larger proposal and consider the present total exemption of all wheels and vehicles from taxation of every kind, and he did not exclude the prospect of dealing with this question at some future time, although it would present numerous difficulties. Here was the clearest indication that in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman in the year 1882, when he himself was dealing with these imposts on locomotion —when he was adding to them in order to find a sum of £250,000, which he was bound to do in aid of main roads—he, himself, the imposer of a tax on locomotion, actually declared that in his view the question of a Wheel Tax was open for the future, and might be dealt with at some future time. And here, forsooth, to-night, the right hon. Gentleman, in furtherance of the new policy of the Liberal Opposition in dealing with the present proposal of Her Majesty's Government, endeavours to raise popular opinion against a tax on locomotion as a tax which ought not to be imposed. Then he (Sir Richard Paget) should like to draw the attention of the Committee, for a moment, to the other part of the indicated policy of the right hon. Gentleman. That policy was this. Let these imposts on locomotion be con-considered so objectionable that they were to be set aside, but he would offer them something in their place. What was the offer? It was an increase on the Succession Duty; and here the right hon. Gentleman gave them an elaborate comparison and statement as to the inequalities existing in respect of the Death Duties. No one who understood this matter in the very least doubted for a moment that, when they were considering the question of the imposition of taxes on real property and personal property respectively, if they turned their eyes in one direction, on the Death Duties, and took those duties alone, excluding everything else from their consideration, there was undoubtedly an inequality in the respective contributions of real property and personal property. But he contended that it was absolutely unfair, in dealing with this question of finance, to leave out of consideration the many other burdens not equally understood in this connection against the different classes of property. Take the Income Tax, for instance. What was the effect of the Income Tax? That was imposed on the gross value of houses and property. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was the very man to point out that, when he handicapped real property, as compared with personalty, to the extent of no less than 16 per cent. In all honesty and justice and fairness, when they were making a comparison of the relative taxation which fell on realty and personalty, they had no right to exclude from their consideration a matter so important as the unequal incidence of the Income Tax on those two classes of property. If that were brought into their consideration in casting up the balance it would present a statement of accounts very different from that which arose when they dealt alone with the Death Duties and refused to see that any other special tax was made on real property. He (Sir Richard Paget) was one of those who rejoiced to see that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had on this occasion obtained a substantial and real contribution from personalty in aid of the rates. That went some way to redress the grievance which had so long been complained of, and complained of with very good reason. He could not say yet whether this would be accepted as a final settlement of the difficulty. They still found that the balance of taxation attached with greater severity on real property, and when they considered, as they must consider, and as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said to-night, they ought to consider local taxation as well as Imperial taxation, and take the burden of the two on realty and personalty, they would still find that more re-adjustment would be required before a balance of taxation was properly effected. Of course, he only asserted his own opinion in this matter, because, until they saw the figures, no positive statement could be ventured in the matter. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, without delay, show them the figures as to the incidence of the amount of licence duty on the various areas of county government, because, until they knew what they were going to receive from those areas, they could not take stock of their position and settle their accounts. He trusted, therefore, that this information would very shortly be given to them. There was another piece of information which he should like to see afforded—namely, that when they were getting these large sums in relief of local taxation which were to be given in connection with the great scheme of local administration about to be introduced, they should have some idea as to the extra expenses which would be thrown upon the Local Authorities. He wished to remark that that scheme of local taxation would undoubtedly give rise to a large increase of expenditure in several directions. For instance, the election expenses of the new Local Authorities would be very heavy, and also the registration expenses. He wished to know whether they could be furnished with any kind of figures or estimate that could be relied upon as to the amount of expenditure on an election within an area containing a given population, an estimate to show how much per head or how much per vote the expenditure was likely to be in connection with the annual elections and with those elections which were to take place every three years. He had an impression that when this expenditure came to be summed up it would be found to present a vast area of figures which would make a hole of some magnitude in the taxation and in the increase of income which would be derived from the new sources of revenue. If such an estimate were possible, it ought to be made at once, and should not be left to the future. They should have the information before them altogether before they parted company with these Budget proposals. There was one argument used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian upon which he thought a word or two should be said. The whole basis of the right hon. Gentleman's contention rested upon an assumption which he had not attempted to prove—namely, that the relative amount of personalty and realty on which the duties were separately levied must be taken as substantially equal. The right hon. Gentleman had made no attempt to prove that, and it was, therefore, nothing but a bare assertion that it would be found to be so, and under that circumstance his argument held good. But was that so? The only official estimate which existed, and which was given as an estimate and no more than an estimate, was one contained in a Return presented to the House at his (Sir Richard Paget's) instance. Now, this was an official estimate of the Treasury, compiled with all the advantages the Treasury possessed for such work, but still not presented by them as a matter of absolute accuracy, but simply as a matter of estimate. For the purposes of an estimate, the figures contained in that Return were probably, if not the best, at any rate, as good as it was possible to obtain them. Now what did this estimate put the figures at? The value of real property was put at £3,778,000,000. What was the figure which, in the same Return, realized personalty was put at for the purpose of comparison? Why, £5,683,000,000. So that if the officers of the Inland Revenue, who had compiled this Return and presented it as the best estimate they could make, were in any degree correct, so far from these two sums being identical, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian assumed they were, there was a difference of nearly £2,000,000,000 between them, and in favour of personalty. Furthermore, they knew that houses were increasing in value from year to year, whilst more houses were being built, and that it could be shown, by the clearest figures, that so far as landed property was concerned, it was diminishing in value every year. So that when they considered that, on the one hand, they had personalty going up steadily in value, if not by leaps and bounds, at any rate going up gradually and surely—and they had the Schedules of the Income Tax to prove it—they had, on the other hand, realty going down in value year by year, and being only kept up as an aggregate by the addition of house property where each new house was brought in. When they made a comparison, they had a Return showing that personal property was considerably higher in value than real property, yet they were now told that the basis for the contention for a change in the Death Duties was that the two classes of property were substantially equal in value. He (Sir Richard Paget) contended that the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian entirely failed him, and that his argument was bound to go along with it; and, further than that, he (Sir Richard Paget) contended that even if the right hon. Gentleman were right in the matter, he left out of his consideration other elements of taxation which attached unfairly to real property. Now, he (Sir Richard Paget) was one of those who were anxious to see these anomalies settled. If they wanted to settle the matter with fairness, however, they must turn their eyes back over the long years during which real property had been taxed in a matter now admitted to be unfair. That unfairness was to be redressed. Why so? Because, when they were about to set up a body to administer the local rates, they were obliged to admit the unfairness and inequality. He asked then, in fairness, that realty should be allowed arrears. Owners of real property might fairly put in a claim for arrears if they had been subjected to unfairness for years. They had a right to say—"Deal with us liberally, because for many a long year you have, on your own confession, improsed upon us taxation which was unjust." He did not desire to ask in this matter for anything beyond the most absolute measure of complete justice and equality of taxation. He should be glad to see every kind of distincton of Death Duty abolished, provided they could establish, as a matter of fact, a re-adjustment of the burden of taxation in the matter of land, houses, and personalty, whether from Imperial or local sources. Death Duties should be beyond all suspicion. There should be no differences whatever in them; and if the Government were obliged to continue the Death Duties for any reason, it should be known how much the balance was in favour of this or in favour of that, and that balance should be redressed by other taxation. He should like hon. Gentlemen opposite, who sometimes thought that hon. Gentlemen on that (the Ministerial) side of the House were led by a desire to obtain an unfair relaxation of taxation for real property, to consider these points. He contended that they asked for absolute justice, and no more. If it could be proved that any kind of property, he did not care what it was, was not bearing its full burden, he, for one, was ready that the taxes upon it should be increased; but he maintained that it was unjust to attempt to deal with this matter and shut their eyes to one class of considerations, looking at one point and banishing another altogether from their minds, because an anomaly existed in one class of Duty—namely, the Death Duty, pleading that there was an immediate necessity for dealing with that and leaving everything else alone.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, that during the short time he would venture to occupy the attention of the Committee and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he hoped to be able to confine himself to one of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals only. He had never taken part in any Budget discussion, nor would he have done so now but for the extreme wave of opposition which he found to be rising in his constituency in regard to the Wheel Tax. The correspondence reaching him by every post from Nottingham was truly alarming, and he was bound to say that he agreed with most of it. He had here a letter to hand to-day, one amongst many others, in which it was announced that a large committee had been promoted on the subject, and in which he was assured by the writer that the Wheel Tax alone meant an impost upon the gentlemen concerned of from £5 to £50 per year. Well, the sum of from £5 to £50 a-year, chiefly affecting struggling tradesmen, was a very serious impost indeed, and in many cases meant just the margin between the possibility of carrying on business with moderate profit and closing the business altogether. Those who complained of this tax described the right hon. Gentleman's proposal in language very strong and very striking indeed. He (Mr. Broadhurst) did not know whether he should like to adopt all of it. He scarcely thought he should. They called it a petty-fogging, they called it a harassing, and they called it a mean measure, and they called it also a small and unworthy proposal to come from hon. or right hon. Gentlemen claiming the least credit for being statesmen or financiers. Without adopting the whole of the phrases his friends used with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's proposal, he (Mr. Broadhurst) was bound to say that he largely agreed with their conclusion. With regard to the tax, he understood, from the right hon. Gentleman's statement the other day, that farmers' carts and waggons were to be exempted from the tax because they were employed in business.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Exempted when used on the farms, but not when used upon the roads.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he should like to know whether there was a single farm business in the country where waggons and carts were employed entirely on the farm, and were not also used on the roads in the neighbourhood. There was not such a farm in existence. He (Mr. Broadhurst) thought he had knowledge enough of rural life yet remaining with him to know that that was almost an impossibility. The Government called these carts and waggons vehicles engaged in business. Would the right hon. Gentleman be good enough, when he got up to speak, to explain to the Committee why a farmer's cart or a farmer's waggon was more a vehicle engaged in his business than was the waggon or cart of the small builder, or, for the matter of that, of the large builder? Where was the difference? Where was the distinction? Where was the difference between the waggon or cart employed, as they would find thousands of instances throughout the country, by a man who was a small jobbing builder and who was a small farmer at the same time? Where was the difference between his carts and the carts of the agriculturists to whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred. One day the waggons and carts of such a man might be used in his building business and another day might be used in his farming business. [Mr. Jackson dissented.] The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) shook his head. The hon. Member was a very able gentleman, as they all recognized, but he (Mr. Broadhurst) would almost venture to put his experience on a level with that of the hon. Gentleman on this subject. Unfortunately, he (Mr. Broadhurst) had had experience as to how these two businesses were mixed up in one particular case, and he knew that the same thing happened in thousands of other instances. They would find it in the case of wheelwrights, and very frequently in the case of blacksmiths—these people carrying on their trades and at the same time conducting farming operations in a small way. How was the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer going to distinguish sufficiently between the vehicles used in these combined and composite instances, and those used solely by a farmer? Why was not a waggon which was constantly used—for instance, a laundry waggon—in a business to be exempt as well as a farm waggon? It was quite as much an implement of trade to the laundry as was the waggon or cart an implement of the farmer. Take another illustration. He had not heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer say he proposed to exempt market gardeners' waggons.

Mr. GOSCHEN: We do.

Mr. BROADHURST said, the right hon. Gentleman did propose to exempt them. Well, if he was going to exempt the market gardeners' waggons from the tax, how was he going to distinguish between such waggons and the waggons, say, of a boot manufacturer—a man who manufactured boots and carried them to the station in his own waggons, to be distributed throughout the country and the world. There was no possibility of drawing a clear and satisfactory distinction between the various industries. One might illustrate these anomalies in a dozen different ways, if it were not for the dislike one felt for occupying the valuable time of the House. It was impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to satisfactorily explain the matter, except in this way—that the farmer's interest was in association and alliance with the landed interest, and that the landed interest monopolized one part of our Parliamentary system to itself, and that the boot, building, laundry, and other trades had no such Parliamentary interest. [Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen (Kent, Faversham): Oh, oh!] The hon. Member for the Faversham Division of Kent said "Oh!" He should have thought that at least that hon. Member should have accepted the statement, for there was no county in the country where the people were better acquainted with this monopoly and with these privileges than the county of Kent, from which the hon. Member came. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that he required this tax on carts and waggons in order to obtain the revenue necessary for carrying on the government of the country.

Mr. GOSCHEN: No, not a farthing of this goes to carry on the government of the country. It is a question between the ratepayers on the one hand and the employers of carts and waggons on the other. This is kept out of the Imperial Budget entirely.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that was merely a technical point. Practically, this money would go to the county revenue.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that it was clearly money required, and if it were not obtained from that source, it would have to be obtained from some other source.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Yes, from the ratepayers.

Mr. BROADHURST said, but who was going to pay this tax but the ratepayers, and amongst whom would be found some of the poorest and most incapable ratepayers. It was a fact that thousands of the people to whom this Wheel Tax would be charged were struggling people, who had the greatest difficulty to make a living out of their small businesses—such as coal sellers, hawkers, and carriers. There was no body of men in the country who had been more hardly pressed, or were more hardly pressed at the present time than that particular class which was struggling for existence with the aid of a heavy cart and one horse. They were a mere shade removed above the status and position of a common labourer. There were few classes of people in the country who could less afford to bear an impost of this kind than this class to which he referred. In his opinion, and no doubt it was very bold on his part to express an opinion on a proposal emanating from a person of such eminence as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but if he might for a moment in the presence of so great an authority venture to express an opinion, he would say that a tax on locomotion of any kind was a bad tax, and a tax which they ought not to be found either in the process of making, renewing, or enlarging in any degree whatever in these days. If the right hon. Gentleman was successful in carrying this tax in the form in which it was proposed, he might carry it by the numbers he had at his back on his side of the House, assisted by some on the Opposition side, but a success of that kind would lead the right hon. Gentleman to his final destruction [*A laugh.*] Well, he meant politically of course. There would be no reason why the right hon. Gentleman should not next year propose to re-establish the old navigation charges. There had never been a more essentially pure unadulterated Tory proposal submitted to this House for many years than the proposal to tax the wheels of a poor struggling industrial community. This was Toryism of the good old sort—Toryism undiluted. It was pure Toryism, and there was no mistake about it. Everyone would understand that, and would know what it was all leading to. Now he had only one or two words more to say, and they were these. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to know where to find revenues both broad and deep without interfering with the industrial interests of the country, he would advise him to turn his attention to the sources at his disposal, if he thought proper to direct his attention to them in ground rents and royalties. These things could be easily disposed of. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be very severe upon him for mentioning these two subjects, but he could assure him that some Chancellor of the Exchequer, if not the right hon. Gentleman himself, would before many years were over, have to turn his attention to these two sources of revenue — these two enormous sources of revenue which at the present moment paid not one penny to the rates or taxes of the country, except in the form of Income Tax. The more they examined this Budget the more they would see that it was a rich man's Budget, and that it contained no relief for labour and no relief for the poor man. There was a penny to be taken off the Income Tax. Well, no doubt those who had incomes to pay on would be very glad to get this reduction, but there was no denying the fact that there were those who had no incomes to be charged. There was no assistance, no hope, not even a thought given to the overwhelming mass of the community in this country whose incomes were below £150 a-year. There were unfortunately tens of thousands of them with incomes of under £150 a-year. Not a thought, not a figure, not a line for them.

Mr. GOSCHEN: They get relief as ratepayers.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he knew that; but if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take the two monopolies of which he had spoken, which for far too long had escaped their proper share of the burdens borne by the taxpayers of the country—if he turned his great mind to these two enormous sources of wealth, still remaining as it were virgin soil to some bold and courageous Chancellor of the Exchequer in the future, he would have done much to relieve even the class to which he (Mr. Broadhurst) had referred from some of the burdens now imposed upon them by relieving articles of import. It was not sufficient to say that this class of citizens escape nearly all the taxation of the country. An hon. Member to-night had said that certain classes would be prepared to take their share of any grave danger in which the country might be placed so far as financial burdens were concerned. Well, the class of the community for whom he (Mr. Broadhurst) spoke were the class who took their share daily from generation to generation in the labour of the country, and in all that made the country great and powerful and wealthy. They were the classes of the community from whom they drew when their interests had to be defended either abroad or at home. It was the blood of these people, it was the bones of these people which were offered up in sacrifice by thousands and tens of thousands, and they must not be too hard in adopting these small and minute processes as a means of taxing the wretched, miserable little incomes, barely sufficient to find their families in bread and clothing. These were proposals unworthy of a Chancellor of the Exchequer of the British House of Commons, and especially unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who knew perfectly well that much of what he (Mr. Broadhurst) was saying in the substance, if not in the form in which he had put it, was incontrovertible, and must be dealt with by himself at no distant date or by some of his successors. He (Mr. Broadhurst) apologized for occupying so much of the time of the Committee; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see how impossible it was for him to make a distinction between the carts and waggons used by farmers and those of persons engaged in other industries, and that he would take a bold, strong measure in omitting the whole tax altogether. If the right hon. Gentleman would do that, one of the greatest difficulties in his Budget proposal would be removed.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, that the Motion before the Committee was for the renewal of the existing Import Duty of 6*d.* on tea brought into the United Kingdom, and to that subject he wished, in the first place, to address himself. It seemed hardly credible that a proposal of this kind should be made in the name of Free Trade to a Free Trade Parliament. If the free and untaxed importation of any article of foreign production was desirable, he submitted to the Committee that it was pre-eminently desirable in the case of an article in daily consumption by the masses of the people, and which could not by any possibility be produced in this country. The importation of tea interfered with no British or Irish industry, and therefore he submitted the duty upon it had to be paid entirely by the consumer, which would not be the case if the price of the imported article had to come down to the price of native production. The hon. Member for Glasgow opposite (Mr. Provand) had mentioned the increasing quantity of tea produced in British India by the aid of British capital. He (Mr. Howard Vincent) would call attention to the fact that British India was absolutely our only free market, either in our own Empire or in any other part of the world, for our productions, and yet, notwithstanding this fact, and what had been stated as to the facilities for British trade in China, duties amounting to from 30, as the hon. Member had said, up to 60 per cent was levied upon every pound of tea brought into Great Britain and Ireland. As the Committee knew, currants, coffee, chicory, and dried fruits were in the same category, whilst on tobacco, notwithstanding the concession and alleviation granted last year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, duties going up to no less than 1,000 per cent were levied. Indeed, he was informed that the working man who paid 3*d.* for his ounce of tobacco contributed something like 2½*d.* of that amount, or five-sixths of the whole sum, to the Free Trade Government as a Free Trade duty. Now some right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite consoled themselves that the £14,000,000 which were annually derived by the Imperial Exchequer from these duties involved no breach in the canons of the principles of Free Trade, because, forsooth, they were derived for the purpose of revenue. Well, those hon. Gentlemen and those Associations in the country whose views on the industrial questions of the country were so often attacked, both in the Press and on the platform, were accused of having no policy and no agreement amongst themselves. Although he had no warrant to speak for anyone but himself, he had no hesitation in saying that they were agreed on this, that it would be far better, and far more conducive to the welfare of the industrial population, whose welfare should be the first care of Parliament, that the duties for revenue purposes should be placed not upon non-competing articles in general use, but rather upon foreign imports competing with the industries, and above all competing with the labour of the United Kingdom. This would involve no serious departure from the present practice, because if hon. Members would look at the Schedule of the Customs Tariff Acts of 1876, they would see that duties were imposed on other articles, the very enumeration of which extended to three pages of the Statute Book, than those he had named, and the reason for raising these duties was given as being to countervail the Excise and Stamp duties that were raised on articles of a like nature of British manufacture. He did not hesitate to assure the Committee that they were agreed that it would be far better to extend the present admirable practice of countervailing duties. Surely those countries that kept out the productions of British or Irish labour by an evergrowing wall of tariffs, had no right whatever to a free market in these islands for competing with articles of our own production without indemnifying our own workpeople for the loss of employment, and still more for the loss of wages involved in the foreign production of such articles. Moreover, it would seem to be nothing less than a national scandal, that while thousands of unemployed were going about the streets and stood idle in our towns and country districts, no less than £150,000,000 worth of competing foreign imports, without counting wheat, should have been brought last year into the home market without paying a single farthing to the alleviation of those heavy rates and taxes which every home industry, whether manufacturing or agricultural, had to bear. Surely, when hon. Members saw the wretched people in rags at every street corner in the Metropolis, they must feel something like indignation that the shops in the West End should be filled to overflowin with articles of luxury of foreign production. It was a significant fact that the £20,000,000 sterling derived from the Customs Duties in this country for so many years exceeded by £6,000,000 the amount derived from the same source by any other nation in Europe, and the amount per head was considerably higher than in any other country. It was possible that they might not be all agreed upon the details of a revised or improved tariff; it was not for the advocates of a general principle to discuss them; it was the function of Gentlemen now sitting, or who would hereafter sit, on the Treasury Bench to draw out the details of such a tariff. What they were agreed upon was that every possible impediment should be removed from British and Irish industry. It was easy for hon. Gentlemen opposite to call them Protectionists, or other meaningless names, but he invited the Committee to consider whether this country was or had ever been a Free Trade country or whether it had ever done anything more than give an unreciprocated free market to the productions of foreign labour. All that they sought was that the weight of Customs duty should be transferred from the back of the home consumer to that of the foreign labour which was producing such disastrous consequences. Hon. Members might perhaps ask why, if he held those opinions, he did not at once move a direct negative to the matter before the Committee. He confessed he had been sorely tempted to do so, more especially as his Friends had been advised by the Prime Minister in "another place" "to walk boldly up to the fortress they had to attack"—the fortress of foreign labour—"and lay seige to it in due form." Having regard, however, to the circumstances of the day, they had to consider whether such action might not produce greater confusion in the House and in the country than the present grievous depression of trade and agriculture. But he asked the Committee to believe that it was from no feeling of timidity, want of courage, or any doubt whatever as to the ultimate triumph of their cause that he did not adopt that course, but rather from a sense of gratitude to and admiration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his efforts—he would say his preliminary efforts—to reduce the burden of internal rates and taxes and transfer it to those who should properly bear it. He had succeeded in discovering that the existence of which had been so frequently denied by the enthusiasts of the Cobden Club—namely, a foreign luxury which offered a fitting object of taxation. He begged to assure his right hon. Friend that there were plenty more foreign luxuries waiting for taxation. His right hon. Friend had also mastered the problem of taxing those foreign securities which had of late, thanks to one-sided Free Trade, absorbed three-fifths of the available capital of the country. It was only to be regretted that the revenue to be levied on horses was to come from the home breeder rather than from the 11,000 or 12,000 foreign horses annually imported from abroad or from the foreign purchasers of some of our best stock. He confidently hoped that before another 12 months had passed the right hon. Gentleman would have made further progress in the path of that fiscal reform which was so urgently desired by great masses of the people, as shown by the Petition signed by 15,000 adult working men which he had recently presented to the House. There was no single country or colony which did not shut out British products. In the early days of the present system this country was the workshop of the world, but he doubted whether there was a single Member of the House who would venture to affirm that that was now the case. It was a very serious question at the present time whether the progress of the country might not have been greater, whether the position of the poorer classes might not have been higher, and whether we might not have freed ourselves from the burden of the National Debt, had it not been for the adoption of this principle of one-sided Free Trade. Let the Committee consider what the defence of national industry had done in Germany and Canada. The state of affairs was best described in a remarkable article in the current number of *Whitaker's Almanack*, which showed that Germany had acquired a practical monoply in the home markets, as was admitted by the hon. Member opposite. [Mr. Provand: I was not aware that I stated that.] If not, the hon. Member had stated something akin to it. The fact however remained, that Germany had, since the defence of its national industry was begun, obtained the practical monoply of the home market, and her export trade had increased in 20 foreign markets and had only decreased in three. In the same period, from 1880 to 1885, British producers had, to a great extent, lost the control of the home market, while the export trade of Great Britain had diminished in the case of 19 markets, and only increased in the case of two foreign countries, Spain and the Argentine Republic, and in three British possessions, Cape Colony, British India, and Australia. As the Chairman himself had shown in the current number of *The Nineteenth Century*, the agricultural and mining population had diminished, and every hon. Member knew well that much fewer hands were employed in almost every industry of the country. True, the amount of personalty valued for Probate Duty sometimes startled the imagination; but was inquiry ever made to what extent they were due to foreign investment? The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a recent address to the Statistical Society, said that although the distribution of wealth had descended somewhat from the upper to the middle class, it had not yet reached the great mass of the labouring population. He would, therefore, earnestly and respectfully press upon the attention of the right hon. Gentleman during the coming year the consideration of those taxes on industry, which he ventured to say were a blight on our fiscal system, more particularly the prohibition upon the cultivation of tobacco, the Excise Duty levied upon the home manufacture of plate, and the taxes raised by stamps and licences upon hotel-keepers, house agents, auctioneers, pawnbrokers, tobacco dealers, and vendors of patent medicines, and above all the heavy rating of machinery which now existed. He took the opportunity of reminding his right hon. Friend of a declaration made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in April, 1881, that "the principles of abstract political economy were more fitted for the inhabitants of Saturn and Jupiter than for the circumstances and condition of Ireland at the present day." From that statement it might be assumed that the same rule was applicable to the rest of the United Kingdom. If the right hon. Gentleman would bear that in mind he would be able, when he presented his next Budget, to show that he had succeeded in transferring a greater burden of taxation to the foreigner than was the case at the present time, and he would then find that he had obtained, as the American statesmen had done, great fiscal as well as great general advantages. He would, at the same time, place in the hands of British diplomatists, who had been described by the Prime Minister as "unarmed men going forth to meet men fully armed," with a reliable weapon, the sword of reciprocity, which would enable them to pierce the armour of tariffs which had prevented the legitimate extension of British trade.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) said, there was reason to believe that in the ratio of 20 to 1 the contracts on the Stock Exchange were of a speculative character. He suggested that an *ad valorem* duty of 1*d.* per £100 should be put on all transactions on the Stock Exchange instead of the tax of 6*d.* on each transaction proposed to be levied. Various estimates of the amount of business of this kind throughout the Stock Exchanges of the country gave totals of from £12,000,000,000 to £25,000,000,000. Assuming the minimum to be a fair estimate, it would give the Chancellor of the Exchequer a revenue of from £500,000 to the maximum exceeding £1,000,000 sterling per annum, instead of the £50,000 which the right hon. Gentleman estimated would be the amount derived from the tax of 6*d.* on each contract note which he proposed. But a difficulty would arise no doubt, because most of the contracts on the Stock Exchange were not committed to paper; the contracts between brokers or jobbers were simply entered in the memorandum books of the buyers and sellers, and the question arose how the tax was to be collected. Perhaps he might be allowed to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in the event of the Government seeing their way, as in the case of the Berlin Stock Exchange and the Paris Bourse, to place the Stock Exchange under Government control, with a licence tax on brokers, that tax, he estimated, would bring in something like £500,000 sterling per annum, while the estimate from the 1*d.* per £100 would certainly amount to not less than £500,000. There would then be a revenue from these sources of £1,000,000 over and above the £200,000 estimated by the right hon. Gentleman to be produced by the duty on bearer bonds. Then there was the question of taxing contracts for the sale of metals, produce, and other commodities. He had made calculations, and he was confirmed by gentlemen of larger experience than himself, which showed that a tax of 1*d.* on all such contracts, many of which were also of a speculative character, would realize nearly £250,000 sterling. There was probably a feeling on the part of the Government that speculative transactions ought to be heavily assessed; if so, he failed entirely to see any objection in equity to extending the tax in this direction. From these sources of revenue the right hon. Gentleman would realize an amount equal to what he obtained from 1*d.* of Income Tax. With regard to the Budget generally, it had been received on all hands with great favour, and it would, he believed, obtain the commendation of the great majority of the country. There was one tax, however, which had given rise to considerable dissatisfaction, and that was the Wheel Tax, and, notwithstanding the emphatic tone he had adopted, he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider that question before the Budget arrangements were finally concluded.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, it had not been always borne in mind in the course of these discussions that the various additional items of taxation had not been proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to enable him to take off 1*d.* from the Income Tax. The right hon. Gentleman had taken off that amount, and could have done so without any additional taxation, but he had put on new taxes with the object of carrying out the provisions of the Local Government Bill which they all thought would be of very great advantage to the country. Looking at each of the items of additional expenditure, the proposed new taxes seemed to him to be fair in every way. No one could say that a duty of 6*d.* on Stock Exchange Contracts was unreasonable. It would produce £50,000, and considering the amount of business done on the Stock Exchange it was an almost infinitesimal tax. There was no reason whatever why this tax should not be charged and put down as a sum in the contract which should be paid by the purchaser of securities. The tax on Bonds was, also, in his opinion a most reasonable charge, and it was one which those who had to deal with such securities had felt might reasonably be imposed. With regard to the Wine Tax, there of course most were agreed. He had heard of one or two objections that it would interfere with foreign Governments, but as the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained that while we did not want to injure our neighbours in any possible way, yet we must look to our own taxation without having any regard for them. No one could say that this was an unreasonable tax or that it was one which fell upon industry or would affect the poor. He had received only one letter from his own constituency with regard to the tax on wheels, but he thought they ought to bear in mind that this duty to which so much objection had been taken was not an Imperial Tax, and many hon. Members seemed to have forgotten that it was one which would go to the localities. When that was understood generally, the tax would be considered just and proper. Surely it was reasonable if two men lived side by side, rated at the same amount, and one had six or eight carts and the other none, that the man who had the carts should pay more than he who had no carts at all for the repair of the roads. He thought that although every one would wish to get rid of the tax on wheels as of every other tax, nobody would contend that it was an unfair tax, and although some Members of the Committee thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had undervalued the amount he would get from it, still, if that were so, it would give all the more assistance to the local taxpayers, and would be hereafter regarded as a just tax. He understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that market gardeners would be exempted. If that was to be the case, in the neighbourhood of London it would be a very large exemption; if all the carts which came up to London to Covent Garden and other markets were exempt it would be a very large one indeed. If that were so he could not see why the High Wycombe carts which came up week after week with chairs should not also be exempt. But he felt sure that the right hon. Gentleman would consider this matter if possible. With regard to the Income Tax, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would carry out the pledge which he gave last Session to do away with the system of poundage in the collection of the tax. He believed that all those who had gone into the question of the system under which the Income Tax was collected agreed that poundage was undesirable. An hon. Member opposite had said that the alterations in the taxation effected by the Budget did not in any way relieve the poor. He differed entirely from that hon. Gentleman. It seemed to him that the rates, especially in the suburban districts of London, were very high indeed, and he believed the system of this Budget, and of the Local Government Bill, which were closely allied, would largely affect the rates, and largely affect the payments made by very small tradesmen and small holders of property in our great towns. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) stated that the Budget gave no relief in respect to articles of general consumption. On that question, let him (Mr. Bartley) refer to one or two facts in connection with it. Articles of general consumption had been dealt with in late years, and to judge of that they must go into the subject for a moment of the incidence of taxation. He had looked up the incidence of taxation from the year 1841. The Committee would understand that Customs and Excise, which were the two great items under which all classes contributed, bore a very important part in relation to this subject. The amount raised in Customs Duties in 1841 was £3,250,000 more than was raised at the present time. That was to say, that in 1841 we raised about £23,387,000, and in 1887 we raised about £20,155,000. In Excise, the amount we raised now was £10,500,000 more than was raised in 1841; that increase had been due almost entirely to an increased consumption of wines, spirits, and beer. The Customs and Excise together amounted in 1841 to £1 8*s*. 6*d*. per head of the population, and in 1887 they amounted to £1 4*s*. 6*d*. per head of the population; therefore, although the amount of Imperial taxation had increased in 46 years to £2 8*s*. from £2 0*s*. 2*d*. per head, yet the Excise and Customs together had decreased 4*s*. per head of the population. This proved conclusively that, in spite of the enormous reduction in the price of wheat and other articles of consumption, the quota of the mass of the people, who contributed largely, and perhaps more than their proper share, to Customs and Excise—to Imperial taxation—had decreased materially per head in the 46 years. Passing from the amount of tax absolutely paid into the Imperial Exchequer on taxable articles of consumption from Customs and Excise, they found that the amounts of those articles consumed—although the Customs and Excise had decreased per head of the population—had enormously increased. In 1841 the amount of sugar which was consumed was 5,000,000 cwt., it was now 22,000,000 cwt.; of tea, the amount consumed was 30,000,000 lbs., now it was 230,000,000 lbs.; of coffee there were 66,000,000 lbs. consumed, now there were 112,000,000 lbs.; of spirits, 7,500,000 gallons, now 10,750,000 gallons; and of tobacco, there were 46,000,000 lbs. consumed in 1841, and now there were 86,000,000 lbs. Therefore, that showed that in spite of the amount which was paid per head in Customs and Excise by the mass of the people having decreased 4*s.* per head in the 46 years, the amount that they had consumed per head had enormously increased. There was only one other matter he desired to refer to, and that was the great question of personalty and real property. He believed there was still a good deal of dissatisfaction as to the way these two great branches of property were dealt with. However it might be proved that real property bore a larger share of the burdens of taxation than people thought, he believed the time was not far off when we should tax real and personal property exactly on the same lines. He could see no reason why this should not be done. Although it would be difficult, and the change would be somewhat far reaching, there was no reason whatever, even in the opinion of many men who were strong Conservatives, why the two sorts of property could not be assimilated and taxed on the same footing. He believed it would simplify to a great extent the whole fiscal system if this could be carried out. With reference to the reduction of the National Debt, he last year complained somewhat that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had reduced the amount fixed for the reduction of the National Debt. He was extremely glad to learn from the right hon. Gentleman's speech that in spite of that reduction, a larger sum, if he understood the right hon. Gentleman aright, had been paid off the National Debt in the course of the past year than had been paid off for many previous years. He knew that the payment of Debt was not a very popular subject to discuss; it was not a subject on which much credit was obtained; but he was quite convinced of this, that it was a subject on which we had not been doing our duty in the past as we ought to have done. There was no doubt that should we ever have to engage in an European war, which God forbid we should, we might add to the National Debt as many hundred millions sterling in a few months as had been added to it in consequence of past wars extending over as many years. Therefore, if we were wise, we should in times of peace do our utmost to reduce the heavy burden which the Debt entailed upon us. He found that we were not now paying nearly as much towards the reduction of the Debt as we paid formerly. In 1841 we paid £29,500,000 for Debt out of a total expenditure of something like £53,250,000; that was 55 per cent of our whole Imperial taxation, or £1 2*s.* 0*d.* per head of the population for Debt alone. In 1887, when an Income Tax of 7*d.* in the pound brought in £13,000,000, whereas in 1841 it would only have yielded £5,250,000—instead of paying £29,500,000 for Debt, we only paid £28,000,000. That was to say, that out of £89,000,000 of expenditure, only 31 per cent of it went towards the interest and extinction of Debt. Per head of the population we last year paid 15*s.* for Debt, as against £1 2*s.* 0*d.* per head in 1841. He was aware that at present we had a number of other things to pay by way of taxation; but he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would next year, when he got the great benefit from the reduction of the interest on Consols, take at least some part of that gain towards increasing the expenditure for the reduction of Debt. It seemed to him that the present was not a rich man's Budget, but a fair Budget all round; it would relieve all classes, and he was sure it would be carried in its entirety. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not give way on any point, except perhaps, it might be by way of relieving the country doctors of the tax on one horse. He was afraid that if the right hon. Gentleman went in for exemptions, the list of the exemptions would increase very rapidly. He therefore trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would stick to his colours, and that they might have the Budget complete.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I think it is the desire of the Committee that to-night, at least, we should not get into any heated controversy on the subject of the Budget, but that the real discussion of the questions at issue between us should be postponed until the Chancellor of the Exchequer has introduced his Bill. I was very glad to hear from the hon Member who has just sat down (Mr. Bartley) what I venture to call such sound doctrines with reference to the reduction of Debt, and I hope the sentiments he has expressed will find an echo in the breast of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I regret very much the step that was taken last year which had for its object the reduction of the effort—I agree with the hon. Member—the inadequate effort we have been making for many years for the reduction of the Debt. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will take that view also, because he is in the position of having committed, if he will allow me to say so, an unnecessary crime. It was quite unnecessary he should have reduced the provision for the Debt by £2,000,000, because, in point of fact, he had £2,000,000 more than he wanted, and, by a wise provision of law, that £2,000,000 has gone in the reduction of Debt. The real truth of the matter is that though some people think it is a great thing to have a surplus, that surplus is only the result of inaccurate estimating. Anybody can make a surplus who will take the expenditure of the country too high and the receipts too low; because the difference between the two things constitute the realized surplus. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not sanguine enough with reference to the product of the Inland Revenue. The Inland Revenue, in point of fact, yielded very nearly £2,000,000 more than the right hon. Gentleman expected, and the expenditure was also less by about £500,000 than he calculated upon. There was consequently a surplus. I only refer to this in passing. I should not have risen at all if I had not desired to make one or two very brief remarks upon the answer made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the observations of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). Now my right hon. Friend stated, in a very moderate manner, his feeling of regret that this Budget made no provision for the diminution of the burdens upon the consuming classes. To that the Chancellor of the Exchequer made the exceedingly plausible reply that the reduction of the rates was, in fact, a reduction to the consumer, because they were consumers of a commodity—namely, the house which paid the rates. The right hon. Gentleman referred to a question which has long occupied the attention of financiers—namely, as to who are the persons who derive the advantage of diminished rates, or who bear the burdens of increased rates. Probably, like the squaring of a circle, that is a question which will not be finally decided for many generations. In the long run the owner of the property either bears the burden of increased rates, or reaps the advantage of diminished rates. Whoever ultimately derives the advantage or feels the burden, there can be no doubt that in the interval, before things find their level, the persons who benefit or lose by the rise or fall of rates are those who actually pay the rates. But who is the person who pays the rates? He is not always by any means the occupier. Nobody knows better that the hon. Member (Mr. Bartley) that in the great towns the poorest people do not pay the rates at all; in the case of compound householders, with whom some years ago we were so familiar, the rates are paid by the owners of the houses. I think there are many hon. Gentlemen who, by experience, know that where the owner of the house pays the rate and the rate is diminished, it is not the least likely he will give immediately the benefit of that diminution of rate to the occupier of the house any more than if the rate is increased the rent is increased. Therefore, speaking of the poorer classes, whether in towns or villages, where the owner of the house pays the rate, the occupier will derive little or no advantage from the diminution of the rate. Looking at it from that point of view, I think my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian was entirely justified in the remark that the character of the Budget is one of relief of property. This is manifest from the fact that even in that respect, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer relied on as refuting that statement, the provisions are exceedingly favourable to property. Passing away from this subject, I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have become aware by this time that some at least of his new taxes, especially the smaller ones, are not popular at all, certainly not popular in proportion to the amount which they yield. There are a good number of small taxes which irritate but which do not bring any very large sum into the Exchequer. I quite admit the distinction the hon. Member has just now drawn between the taxes which are to go to the Imperial Exchequer and those which are to go in contribution of the local rates; but people when they have to pay taxes are not very apt to distinguish where money is going to. The taxes upon locomotion are particularly unpopular. Of late years we have diminished the taxes upon locomotion. We diminished the Carriage Duty by a very considerable sum, and what is still more singular is that, upon locomotion by railway, we have sacrificed a duty almost as great as that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is proposing upon wheels and horses. I forget at this moment what are the exact figures; but I know that when I was at the Exchequer I deeply regretted the constant fall in the yield of the Railway Duty. You are reversing that policy altogether in the course you are pursuing, and reversing it, I think, somewhat unfairly; because, while you diminish largely the taxes upon railways, you increase the taxes upon other classes of locomotion. I observed with very much surprise that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not answer the question put to him by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian—namely, "Supposing the House is indisposed to authorize the Wheel Tax and the Horse Tax and the tax upon locomotion, what are you going to do?" Upon the answer to that question will very much depend the course to be followed by the Opposition. Hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House will be glad to know what the alternative is. Then there is another new tax, and that is one for Imperial purposes—the stamp upon foreign bonds and shares. I do not contend that these bonds and shares ought not to be taxed. I think it is very fair that they, like other property, should bear their share of taxation; but I have heard that in the City it is thought that the particular method proposed by the right hon. Gentleman is not convenient and hardly practicable. Now, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer is dealing with these Stock Exchange transactions, why does he deal only with transactions that result in transfers? An enormous number of transactions consist of time bargains for mere purposes of speculation. Why should these escape taxation? In other countries, such as France and Germany, they do not. But I only referred to this point, in passing, because the main question raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has reference to the Succession Duties, and I share the disappointment of my right hon. Friend at the declarations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I did hope that the old and tedious question as to the inequalities of taxation as between realty and personalty was at last going to be settled. The House of Commons has been wearied with this question for years. It has been alleged that land bears too great a proportion of the burdens of local taxation, and we hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to put an end to it, and was going to establish a system of equal burdens upon real and personal property in respect of local taxation. Why, it is only upon that footing that you can really sever Imperial and local taxation. That is what everybody desired; that is what I hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer meant to propose. Upon this assumption the Chancellor of the Exchequer received the congratulations and compliments of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer now explains that he has not settled the question at all; that there still exists an inequality in respect of local taxation; and that that inequality must be borne in mind in considering the contributions of realty to Imperial taxation. The question is therefore not settled at all. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer was challenged by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian because, under his arrangement, realty will still pay a much less share than personalty to Imperial taxation—a fact which cannot be denied—the right hon. Gentleman took refuge in generalities, and said—"Oh, you must look at the thing as a whole; and if realty is paying too little towards Imperial taxation, then you must fall back again on local taxation, as we did before." Now, we can never get a sound system of finance until we settle what is the contribution which realty ought to pay, as compared with personalty, in respect both to Imperial and local taxation. That is what we want to get at. When we have settled that, we may deal with our two Budgets as separate Budgets; but as long as we fail to do that, we mix up the two things inextricably together. I venture to say we shall never get rid of these constant controversies, which are injurious to both the classes who are interested in either category of property. We ought, therefore, now that we are dealing with the question of local taxation, to arrive at the due proportion to be paid by realty and personalty, in respect both to Imperial and local taxation. If you say that realty as compared with personalty is still paying too much in local taxation, bring forward your proposal for making the contributions equal, and then we shall know how to deal with realty in regard to Imperial taxation. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian gave not what he stated to be the strictly accurate figures, but rather a suggestion of the proportions in which realty and personalty were subject to taxation for Imperial purposes; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer met them by saying—"Oh, but personalty has been increasing and realty has been diminishing in value." That may be true; I dare say it is; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer never said what were the relative proportions between realty and personalty now. The right hon. Gentleman never denied the figures suggested. It might be that the value of the one was diminishing and that of the other was increasing. But what the Committee are entitled to know is, what are the relative proportions between the two now. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has better means of ascertaining that than anyone else; and I think, in coming to a conclusion upon this matter, we ought to hear from him—I do not say to-night, but before this question is settled—some materials which would enable us to judge as to the proper burdens to impose on these two great categories of property. It is no answer to my right hon. Friend to say—"You have put the amount of realty too high and the amount of personalty too low." If that is so, let the right hon. Gentleman correct his figures; but that does not affect the substance of my right hon. Friend's argument. My right hon. Friend drew the conclusion, from the figures he had, that personalty is paying £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 more than realty. You may so alter the figures that the result may be £2,000,000 or £3,000,000, instead of £3,000,000 or £4,000,000; but still the argument of inequality and injustice remains. Even although you show that realty is less than the figures that my right hon. Friend indicate, the answer to that is that if it is less it will pay a less amount. The Chancellor of the Exchequer up to this moment has given no answer to the point made by my right hon. Friend—namely, that now, when you are proposing by your arrangements as to local taxation to redress the balance between realty and personalty, you ought to redress it in both cases. You ought, in the case of local taxation, to make the contribution of the two kinds of property alike; and you ought, also, in the case of Imperial taxation, to redress the inequality by making them both alike. Until that is done, we shall never get our local and Imperial taxation upon a sound basis, and we shall go on Session after Session with this perpetual squabble between parties interested in personal and real property as to whether one or the other is entitled to a greater remission of taxation. We know that, unfortunately, these questions are apt to assume the form of class questions, of Party and political questions, as between the Succession Duty and the taxes on consumption, and other taxes on personalty; and it is in the interest not only of the Exchequer, but in higher social and political interests, that this question should be finally settled, that we should have some reliable figures on which we can proceed in order to put an end to controversies that are so tedious and so injurious.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said, he desired to protest against the tax on horses, which he thought would be detrimental to the breeding of horses, and also a great charge to those who lived in the country, and who were obliged to use horses for the purpose of locomotion. He thought the Government should do all in their power to encourage the breeding of horses; indeed, a man who kept a horse conferred a benefit on the country. In the first place, he encouraged farmers to breed horses; in the next place, he was obliged to buy forage; and, in the third place, he was obliged to employ some one to groom the horse; altogether, instead of taxing a man for keeping a horse, he, as an agriculturist, should be very glad to see a grateful Government give £1 to a man for every horse he kept. There was already a considerable number of horses imported into the country; we did not breed enough to supply our own wants. Last year there were no less than 11,649 horses imported into this country, of the value of £198,000. Now, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to derive revenue from horses, he (Mr. Jeffreys) would rather that he taxed the foreigners' than our own. If the right hon. Gentleman was not willing to remit this tax altogether, he (Mr. Jeffreys) would put in a plea for those agriculturists who were obliged to keep riding horses as well as agricultural horses. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to allow every agriculturist to keep one riding and driving horse for every 500 acres, or part of 500 acres, which he occupied. That would be only just, because a farmer was obliged to keep a nag to ride on about his farm and to carry him to market. In fact, this class of horse was quite as necessary for the purpose of his trade or business as any of his agricultural horses. He sincerely hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be hard upon a very unfortunate and struggling race of men. He also desired to put in a plea for the country doctor, who was obliged to keep a horse to follow his calling; in fact, he could not do without one. Much, too, might be said as to the exemption from the tax of country parsons, who, perhaps, lived far from the station, and who must of necessity keep either a cob or a pony. Country doctors and country parsons could not possibly do without their useful horse, and although it might be a very trifling tax for the rich people who lived in towns and kept luxurious carriages, yet for struggling people living in the country the tax would be a great hardship. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not add to their burdens by making them pay £1 for every horse they kept.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he would only intrude himself upon the Committee for a few moments. In doing so, he was consoled by the fact that the point he wanted to refer to was one which no other Member had dealt with. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed a *5s.* duty per dozen upon bottled wines. Of course, with reference to the higher classes of wine there was nothing to be said about it, except so far as one might object to particular taxation in the nature of Protection. But this *5s.* tax would entirely prohibit the introduction into this country of cheap wines bottled abroad. Possibly, the class of wine of which he was about to speak did not come within the cognizance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or any of his friends. But the right hon. Gentleman might, perhaps, not be surprised to learn that a good hock could be bought in Germany for 12 marks per dozen. If they put *5s.* a-dozen duty on that they would prevent entirely the importation of that wine into this country. It was quite impossible to get such wine bottled here. If they brought a wine of that class over in the wood, the result certainly would not be healthy or satisfactory to the drinker. There was a class of claret—possibly the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not drink it—that might be bought at one franc 30, one franc 50 or 60 cents, a good drinkable claret, which if brought over in wood would be completely spoiled in any bottling; it certainly would not then be claret at all. There was also the very light Italian wine of the Campagna, which he had never seen here in wood. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted to prevent poor people, who could not afford dear wines, from drinking wine, he could not have taken a more effectual step. He would say nothing from the Alliance point of view; but speaking only from the point of view of those who were temperate, and who did not go entirely with the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid

Lawson), there was something to be said against a class of taxation which killed the sober drink and increased the worst form of drinking.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) said, he would not have risen to take part in the debate but for the remarks which were made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst). He was not aware that the hon. Gentleman was an agricultural authority, and certainly, if the hon. Gentleman had any experience in agricultural matters, his experience had not been obtained, at any rate, in the county of Kent. The hon. Gentleman was most unfortunate in mentioning that county to show that the people were dissatisfied with the proposed Wheel Tax. More especially was he unfortunate in selecting for the purposes of his argument that portion of the county which he (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) represented. The poor ratepayers were very well satisfied with the idea of a tax upon wheels. The hon. Gentleman thought that the privileges of the landowners and occupiers had been greatly misused in the county of Kent. What had some of these privileges been? For the last 10 or 12 years they had been to see their roads cut up by traction engines and other heavy vehicles which paid nothing whatever for the maintenance of the roads. He believed it would be a great boon to have the sound principle recognized, that those who used the roads should pay for them. While he was anxious to give support in the main to the Wheel Tax, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to modify it in this direction. It was an excellent suggestion made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Nottingham (Mr. H. S. Wright) that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should increase the weight upon which it was proposed to assess the duty. If the weight upon carts and waggons upon which duty was payable were raised to 15 cwt. or one ton, the tax would at once catch the great men who were then ratepayers, and who would benefit by the relief of the rates, while it would exclude from the operation of the tax a number of small men who existed in all parts of the country, and had just managed to save enough to buy a cart or van for carrying out coals or removing furniture. That would be a just relief to a large number of persons. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman two sources by which he could recoup himself to some extent. He had been sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that he did not intend to tax bicycles. His (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen's) view was that bicycles which used the roads, although they did not wear them, and which made the roads a source of pleasure to a large number of persons, might be very fairly taxed at the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* or even 5*s.* a-year. Then, again, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had dealt with the question of hawkers' licences. It seemed to him that it would have been better to have remitted only part of the licence duty, so that the hawkers would have had to pay in regard to duty and wheel tax, a sum of £3 10*s.* a-year. By that means they would avoid increasing the large number of persons who went about from house to house, and were a pest to the rural communities. This class of persons rendered themselves a nuisance by pilfering under the pretence of selling, and it was most undesirable that they should have the whole tax taken off them. As to the tax on foreign wines, he welcomed it cordially. He was not only a Tory, but a Protectionist, and was glad to see taxation put upon foreign exports, and especially upon luxuries; and he hoped that the Chanceller of the Exchequer would see his way, as there were other luxuries awaiting similar treatment, to raise a substantial addition to the Revenue from those sources. While the right hon. Gentleman had been casting about for a source of revenue to enable him to take off a penny from the Income Tax, there was one subject that he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not thought of—namely, the re-establishment of the 1*s.* duty on corn. He (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) had been a farmer for some years, and some time ago that tax had been in existence without the circumstance having been appreciated by him, or without, indeed, his having been aware of it, although it brought in £1,000,000, and would probably, if now resuscitated, produce £1,500,000. If such a duty were imposed, no human being would be the worse for it—certainly not the farmer.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield) said, there was one thing he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the

Chancellor of the Exchequer would not do, and that was to follow the advice of the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, so far as bicycles and tricycles were concerned. These were fast becoming the chief form of amusement to those who could save a little money, not only in the towns, but he was glad to say in the counties also. There were only two points in regard to which, in addition to the various ones upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given way, he (Viscount Wolmer), as representing an agricultural constituency, should like to appeal to him. With reference to the first of those points, he would appeal to the experience of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) to support the truth of what he said. His contention was that in regard to a farm of over 500 acres, particularly when they got to the large down farms, a nag was quite as necessary to a farmer for his work as was his agricultural horses. Therefore, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to allow each farmer a nag to every 500 acres of land. The next point to which he would like to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention was one he could best illustrate by giving an extract from a letter he received only yesterday—a type of many other letters. A small tradesman had written to him to say that he was a struggling tradesman, possessing five vans, but that never by any chance were more than four on the road at the same time, the fifth being merely kept for cases of emergency. This person said—

> "Would it not be hard if I had to pay the tax on five; whereas, as a matter of fact, I never have more than four going on the road at the same time."

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (Exeter) said, he only rose to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he replied, to make an authoritative statement which would remove some misconceptions prevailing in the country. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would be good enough to say to those Members who might vote to-night for these Resolutions that they would not be thereby pledging themselves to the proposal as to the Wheel Tax or the Horse Tax; because he agreed with what had been stated by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, when they expressed the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would be in a position to exempt doctors, and, if possible, ministers of religion, to some extent at all events. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) endorsed very much what had been stated just now with regard to the question of hawkers' licences, because he believed that there could be no doubt that the entire abolition of those licences would throw a good deal of extra responsibility on the local police, and would render it much more difficult for the police to cope with the evil of vagrancy than would be the case if the licences were not entirely abolished. As the constituency he (Sir Stafford Northcote) represented contained a considerable number of hawkers in its midst, he could bear testimony to the fact that very severe competition indeed existed between the hawkers and the small tradesmen, and he thought it would be unfair to these small tradesmen if the hawkers' licences were entirely done away with.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he did not propose to go over the ground which had been so well trodden by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) and the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). He proposed to express a general approval of the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to hand over to the local authorities a very considerable amount of Imperial taxation in aid of local rates; although when they came to the details of the proposal, there would be a great deal with which he should not be able altogether to approve of. He meant to confine himself that night merely to the subject of the Succession Duties, a matter to which he had given attention for some years past. The closing remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget Speech, in which he contrasted the assessment of the Income Tax upon House property as compared with land, and gave that as a justification for continuing the unequal treatment of personalty as compared with realty, appeared to him (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) to show that the right hon. Gentleman hardly sufficiently appreciated the fact that house property paid at the present moment Succession Duty — that all house property, leasehold and freehold, paid the duty. Leasehold houses paid probate, as well as Succession Duty, but all houses paid Succession Duty. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was quite right in saying that the increase had been very great, in the value of houses of late years, as compared with land. His (Mr. Shaw Lefevre's) impression was that at that moment not one-third of the Succession Duty was really paid by land in the ordinary sense of the term, and that more than two-thirds of the Succession Duty was paid by houses—whether freehold or leasehold. But the great inequality which existed at the present moment as to the Succession Duty arose in respect of the difference in treatment of freehold houses and leasehold houses, and he thought he should be able to show the Committee that the inequality in that respect was most galling, and one which, at all hazards, ought to be done away with. He would quote three cases which he had taken for purposes of illustration. First, the interest in a leasehold house valued at £5,000; secondly, a freehold house valued at £5,000; and, thirdly, a freehold ground rent which was worth £5,000, but of which the ground rent was only £50 a-year. The Committee would be surprised to hear what the difference of treatment between Succession Duty and Probate was in these three cases. In the case of the interest in a leasehold house worth £5,000 the Probate covered Succession Duty on lineal descendants, and the amount payable was £150. Take the case of a freehold interest in a house of the same value, and the duty was estimated on the interest of the owner and not on the actual fee value. He found that the amount payable in that case would be only £25 as compared with £150 in the other case. In other words, the owner of the leasehold must pay six times more than the owner of the freehold house.—[Mr. Goschen: What age does the right hon. Gentleman take?]—He had taken the age at 45, which gave about half an average interest. He found that in that case the heir who came into possession of the freehold would pay only £25, as compared with £150 paid by the owner of the leasehold house. In both cases, the taxes were paid by the owners; therefore, whatever excuse there might be arising out of the argument of payment to the local rates, applied to the leasehold house as well as to the freehold house.—[Mr. Goschen: How does the right hon. Gentleman arrive at his amount?]—In estimating the life interest, he had taken the average at 45, which was about the equal of the actual value. One per cent upon £2,500 gave £25, and that was a sum he believed he was correct in taking. In the other case, he had taken the value of the interest, which was £3 per cent upon £5,000, and amounted to £150. Now, he came to the third case—that of the freehold ground rent of £50 a-year, the present value of which was £5,000, in consequence of their only leaving 15 or 16 years of the lease to run; and the amount payable for Succession Duty in that case was only £6 4*s*., the reason being that the Succession Duty was levied not upon the actual value of the property, but upon the capitalized value of the rent. There they had another great anomaly arising out of the Succession Duty. In other words, the amount was 24 times less than the amount paid by the owner of the leasehold house. These three cases, he thought, showed an extraordinary inequality and an extraordinary anomaly arising out of the present position of the law as to Succession Duty and Probate better and in more full argument than he could use. Of course, the whole subject of the death duties was full of anomalies. Take the case of collieries. As a general rule, collieries were leased subject to Royalties, and were generally carried on by partnerships. It was one of the anomalies of Succession Duty and Probate, that while the lessees paid not only all the local rates, but also Probate and Legacy Duty, the owner of the colliery, who received the Royalty, was subject only to Succession Duty. Let him take the case of mill property of manufacturing towns. There, again, the same principle came in, that being partnership property, whether leasehold or freehold, it was subject both to Probate and Legacy Duty, whereas if worked by a single person, the property, if a freehold, on the death of the landlord would pay only the Succession Duty, and not Probate. This appeared to him such an extraordinary anomaly that he really thought the Government should, when the case was actually brought before them, do something to meet it. What was the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer? Why, practically, he proposed that ½ per cent additional Succession Duty should be paid in the case of lineal descendants; but he proposed to spread the payment over eight years, instead of over four or five years, as at present. The effect of that would be to reduce the actual present value of the payment, and to all intents and purposes, instead of adding ½ per cent to the Succession Duty, by spreading it over eight years, he added only about ¼ per cent. In case of collateral descendants, the right hon. Gentleman increased the amount somewhat more; but he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would like to know from the right hon. Gentleman what he expected to receive from the increase at the present moment—what the ultimate amount of increase would be. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had been unable to make out, from the calculations he had been engaged in, that during the present year he would receive any increase at all, for the effect of spreading the payment over eight years would, he thought, somewhat reduce the present payments rather than increase them. After all, the main subject of inequality under the present levying of Succession and Probate Duty appeared to him to rise, as he had said, in respect of freehold and leasehold houses. He need not remind hon. Gentlemen that leasehold houses paid all the local rates at present; and if that were to be taken into consideration leasehold houses ought to be exonerated. On the other hand, if leasehold property was to be charged with taxes of that kind—namely, with Probate and Succession Duty—it appeared to him that freehold property ought to be subject to the same charge. It appeared to him that the Government in this matter were on the horns of a dilemma—either they ought to make exemption in the case of leasehold houses, or they ought to extend the same charge for probate to freehold houses as to leasehold houses. His own opinion was that it would be better to treat all these properties alike, and make them subject both to Probate and to Succession Duty, levied in the same manner as in the case of other property. In that way a considerable amount of money would be raised. It was extremely difficult to ascertain what the actual amount raised in this way would be; but his own impression was that a considerable amount of revenue would ensue, the great bulk of which would not come from the land, but from freehold houses, ground rents, Royalties, and leasehold houses, and other property of that kind, and would go in aid of the Exchequer, and would, perhaps, enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer even to do something more than he had done in the direction of giving additional aid to local rates.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) said that, perhaps, some hon. Members were not aware that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself £2,000,000 to the good at the end of the year, it was owing to something faulty in the Estimates at the beginning of the year. That might be so to some extent; but it was also somewhat owing to the fact that we had gone through a peaceful period, and had not been put to a great expense, as we were not very long ago, in reference to Egypt. However, he had not risen to talk about that, but to answer one or two of the remarks which had been made by hon. Members opposite in reference to agriculture and farms. He had been very much surprised to hear more than one hon. Member opposite grudge the English farmer the present small measure of relief proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in connection with this cost of keeping up the roads. Those hon. Gentlemen must know that they had been told by persons holding their political views over and over again that the farmers of the country must not drive their heads against the wall of Protection, or any nonsense of that sort. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, he was very glad that what he had read and heard, emanating from Radicals in the country, was not disputed in the House. But, then, they were told at the same time that what they should go in for was a re-adjustment of local burdens and local taxation. They were told that they should see that heavy drays and waggons were taxed. He had heard these speeches over and over again himself. It was said that these heavy vehicles were cutting up the roads, and should be called upon to pay something towards the expense of keeping up the roads. But now hon. Members said—"Oh, but the farmers' waggons and the farmers' carts should be taxed." Surely, hon. Members must know that many a farmer's cart did not go on the road from the beginning to the end of the year. There were some carts and waggons that did, no doubt; but many of the farmers' carts and waggons merely crossed the road that might bisect a farm, or something of that sort, and yet they would tax those carts. Surely, it must be known to hon. Members why this point had been conceded. The farmer had been called upon for many years past, whilst he had been undergoing the slow process of ruin, to pay the surveyor's rates. He had been paying many pounds a-year in respect of the roads, which were used to a much greater extent by the heavy drays and waggons of his richer neighbours in trade — the brewers and the millers, who had not been contributing as many shillings as he had half-crowns to keep them in repair, although he was being ruined while some of the former were making immense profits. He was glad that somebody in the country was making profits; and whilst he did not object to seeing the brewer and the miller prosper, he was bound to say that the proper principle of taxation was to make those pay most who were most opulent and could best afford it, and to save those who were not in that happy position. So far as the roads were concerned, by all means come upon those people who used them and cut them up. As to the Horse Tax, he hoped they clearly understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer that no horse kept by a farmer would be taxed unless it was kept wholly and solely for the purposes of pleasure. He hoped that was clearly understood. If a farmer was lucky enough to get a rich wife, or to own a gold mine which brought him in an income, and enabled him to keep a hunting horse or a brougham horse, make him pay for them by all means; but if he only kept a horse or two for the purposes of riding or driving around his field and looking after his business, he (Mr. Gray) earnestly hoped the right hon. Gentleman would never dream of taxing such animals. If the right hon. Gentleman did so, although he (Mr. Gray) should be very sorry to take up such a position, he should be bound, in his humble way, to give the right hon. Gentleman's proposal the most strenuous opposition. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), having first of all sneered at the farmers, had gone on to say that he would not have anyone who had not an income of £100 or £150 taxed, and called upon to pay these heavy burdens. Well, the hon. Member surely must know that thousands and tens of thousands of our farmers of late years had not had anything like £150 a-year income. Under those circumstances probably the hon. Member would remit from those people all the burdens of taxation falling upon them. Then they had been told that there was nothing at all in the Budget which helped the working man. Well, his (Mr. Gray's) own opinion was that the working man's prosperity always had and always would depend very much on the prosperity of his employer. If a business paid well, he did not care what the business was—whether it was farming, or whether it was lace manufacture, or whether it was the manufacture of shoes—he was quite sure that when that business was doing well, it was a happy state of things for the operatives employed in the business, and that when that business was doing badly, the operatives suffered as well as the master. So that if they tried to oppress the farmer more than he was oppressed now, they could not do it without at the same time injuring the farm labourer. He (Mr. Gray) desired to see the labourer benefited and considered quite as much as any hon. Gentleman opposite did. He believed that the whole gist of this Budget was to equalize local burdens as much as might be. As to the idea of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, that in the Budget there should be a complete scheme for the weeding out of the difficulties and inequalities as to personal property, he was sorry to say he did not think any such gigantic attempt could or ever would be made in a Budget. He believed the present financial proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a step in that direction; but he doubted whether any attempt would ever be made in one Budget to settle the whole of these inequalities. He hoped that personal property would be called upon to pay its fair share of all burdens; but he did not think that this great subject would ever be threshed out in one scheme. He (Mr. Gray) and those who thought with him were often twitted with not having the courage of their convictions, but several hon. Members had spoken boldly from that side of the House to-night in support of them, and he did most anxiously look forward to the time when not only foreign champagne would be called upon to contribute to the revenue, but when many other foreign articles would be taxed for choice, certainly articles of luxury. He did not wish to see a poor man's food made dear, or anything approaching it; but there was a very wide difference between the 1*s.* loaf, of which they had heard so much lately and before the last Election, and taxing lace or taxing silk, or any of the long list of those articles which were imported from abroad. With regard to carriage wheels which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to tax, he must say he regretted that it had not been proposed to tax foreign wheels, and the parts of wheels which come from abroad. He had heard that the proposed Cart Tax would interfere with the business of cart-makers. He hoped not, but no one could deny that the importation of carriage wheels from abroad seriously interfered with our home businesses, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would think over this subject and that the day would come when we should have a really perfect Wheel Tax. Then there was always ready for the right hon. Gentleman, whenever he chose to turn his attention to it, their good old friend the Malt Tax. There was something to be done in the direction of taxing foreign barley. [*A laugh.*] He heard an hon. Gentleman opposite laughing; but the hon. Member knew very well that when his Party were in power a tax, equivalent to 80 per cent on its value on all the barley grown for malting purposes, had been allowed to exist. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman assented. Then he said, shame to those hon. Gentlemen who agreed with Free Trade, and who now taxed beer, and yet admitted foreign barley and sugar used for beer free. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some future Chancellor of the Exchequer, would see what could be done in this matter. His remedy would be to reduce the Beer Duty of 6*s.* 3*d.*, and put the tax on foreign barley and sugar entering this country for brewing purposes. It might be difficult to do that, but it must be remembered that if his suggestion were carried out it would not have the effect of adding to the cost of a single pint of beer. All he proposed was to take the present charge, say on point A, and put it on point B, and if that were done, logically speaking, there was no reason in the world why it should raise the price of beer. He apologized for troubling the Committee so long, but he was naturally very anxious that everything should be done to equalize taxation and to uphold the interest of the working classes. He was most certainly anxious to advance the interest of the working classes, but never would they advance those interests, as they should do, in a thorough manner, particularly the interests of that most important class of British workmen, the agricultural labourers, until many of them on the opposite side of the House showed more sympathy with agriculture than they had done in the past. It was the fashion amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite to sneer at the farmers, and whenever a little tu'penny-ha'penny form of relief was given to the farmers, they at once said—"Oh, that will go into the landlord's pocket." While they talked to them in that way, they were doing all they could to prevent the agricultural labourer from rising up the rounds of the social ladder, which he (Mr. Gray) was as anxious to see the agricultural labourer do as any hon. Gentleman opposite could be.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. C. W. Gray) was extremely proud of the fact that himself and his Friends who were Fair Traders talked boldly; but if he had been in the House when his leader the hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) was speaking, he would have learnt that the hon. Gentleman had such an absolute, intense admiration for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that, with great regret, he had put his conscientious opinions into his pocket, and intended only to talk but not to act. The hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Gray) was a farmer, and complained of the position of the farmers. He (Mr. Labouchere) would tell the hon. Gentleman why that position perhaps was not as good as it ought to be. It was because the hon. Member and his Friends would not act, but allowed themselves to be the slaves and servants of the landlords. He would recommend English farmers to take example by what was being done in the Sister Island. They would find there that the farmers had managed somehow to reduce their burdens, and that they had reduced that greatest burden of all upon the land—namely, the rent. Let them act together; let them inaugurate some little Plan of Campaign, and they would find themselves as fortunate as the farmers of Ireland. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to be under the impression that they ought to be thankful to him whenever he put on any tax, because he had been good enough to take off a 1*d.* from the Income Tax. What he (Mr. Labouchere) liked was a Budget which took off taxes, but did not put any on. He should like to know how many people in this country paid the Income Tax. Not a seventh of the people—certainly not more than a seventh of the people would benefit by the right hon. Gentleman's proposal. The right hon. Gentleman had a surplus. He might have taken 1*d.* off the Income Tax without putting on fresh taxes; but the right hon. Gentleman had been anxious to make a present, which was variously estimated at £4,000,000 of money by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and at £3,000,000 by himself, to the landed interest. They were told that they ought to look upon this Budget merely in its financial aspect, but he (Mr. Labouchere) was afraid he could not do that, because he saw that it was drawn up on the old Tory lines. It was a class Budget. Its object was the well-known object of the Tories and of the landed interest—namely, to pillage the masses for the benefit of the classes. What had preceded this Budget? The Local Government Bill. And it was said that it deprived the landed gentry of their position in the counties. The landed gentry did not like this; but the Government was willing to give them a sop, because they knew that they must make them some concession. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he was making a concession to them of £3,000,000. He should show before he sat down that the greater portion of that relief went into the pockets of the landlords. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he was merely shifting the burden from the shoulders of one class to the shoulders of another—that was to say, taking it from the ratepayers and putting it on the taxpayers. But the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that he was not doing so. He said he was making a concession to the landowners because land had fallen in value, and because the burdens on land had increased. He (Mr. Labouchere) denied absolutely both those assumptions. He denied that the land had fallen in value, and he denied that the burdens upon it had increased. The question depended upon the time from which they started. If they said that land had fallen in value within the last two or three years he perfectly admitted it; but if they asserted that it had fallen in value since 1840, he absolutely denied the proposition. The capital value of land had increased between 1840 and 1871 by £360,000,000 sterling. Did any hon. Member assert that land had fallen by that amount between 1871 and the present time? The tax Returns showed that it has not fallen so much, and, consequently, he was right in saying that land had not fallen to the value it had before Free Trade was introduced. The landlords said they were badly off. No doubt that was the case, and he would tell them why. It was because they seemed to be under the impression that land was always to go up in value; they thought it was a nice thing for it to go up; they imagined that they could always spend the same amount of money and yet it would continue to rise in value; they mortgaged it exceedingly and spent money on it, and they had now to go back to its value before 1840. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) complained that this Budget secured to land a greater exemption from Imperial taxation than was secured to personal property. His right hon. Friend suggested that that was most improper; but he went much further than his right hon. Friend, and wanted to see the burden upon land very much greater than the burden upon personalty. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite did not know what was the Radical doctrine with regard to land. He would explain it. It must be remembered that land originally paid the entire expenses of the Imperial Government, with the exception of the amount levied upon Crown lands. This was not in the nature of a tax; it was in the nature of rent. The landowners managed to shirk the payment of this rent; but in 1698 an arrangement was made by which, in lieu of these general obligations, they should pay not as taxation, but as rent, the sum of 4*s*. in the pound on the income derived from land. That was a reasonable arrangement; but what did the landowners do? This rent was renewed by Parliament year by year; but the landowners always insisted that the assessment of 1698 should be taken. The land consequently went up in value; landowners were not assessed on the actual value of land, but they were assessed on its value in 1698. In 1780 Mr. Pitt made this land rent perpetual. It then produced about £2,000,000 sterling per annum, and at the present moment it produced only £2,000,000 sterling per annum. If, however, they took the yearly value of land, mines, quarries, &c., it would be found that its value amounted to £200,000,000, and consequently that land at the present time, without going into taxation, ought to pay to the State £40,000,000 sterling as rent. Land now paid £2,000,000 sterling. Landowners recognized that they ought to pay that, but they every year evaded the payment of £38,000,000 sterling. Now with regard to the Death Duties, the landed gentry were very indignant at the time at having to pay Death Duties, and they pleaded that they ought not to pay them, because the land rent of £2,000,000 sterling had been made perpetual. Mr. Pitt brought in a Bill taxing land and realty, and they insisted that the Bill should be divided; the Bill then went up to the House of Lords. The House of Lords then threw out the Death Duties on realty and passed them on personalty. The right hon. Gentleman the present Member for Mid Lothian in 1853 passed an Act imposing a Succession Duty of 1 per cent on land, but as had been stated frequently in the course of the evening the right hon. Gentleman did not have this levied upon the real value of the land, but upon a certain number of years' purchase, during which it was supposed it would be in the possession of the successor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer put it down at 13½ years' purchase. The Chancellor of the Exchequer then made a most extraordinary statement. He said that as the land had gone down in value this Succession Duty of 13½ years purchase was greater than it was before. But surely the right hon. Gentleman had made a mistake. The 13½ years purchase must be the purchase of yearly value, and if the land had gone down in value the rent must also have gone down in value. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that this distinction ought to be sustained because the person who inherited land was not in the same position as the person who inherited personalty; he could not sell the land at the price he choose to put upon it, but he could sell it at the buyer's price, which was the real price. The right hon. Gentleman went further and said that the successors to landed estates had four years in which to pay the Succession Duty in eight instalments, but he had converted these into 16 instalments. Why had the right hon. Gentleman made this extension? They were told that the landowner had difficulty in paying ready money, but he would point out that a man who was left a business with a certain amount of capital in it had a greater difficulty in paying in one sum the Probate Duty upon it. At the present moment land paid one-fifth of the amount paid by personalty; in round figures it paid £700,000 per annum as Succession Duty. On that principle he made the landowners a present of £3,200,000 per annum as against personalty. It was stated in an article in *The Whitehall Review* that four financiers had died during the last year who were worth £12,000,000 sterling, and that their successors had paid £360,000 inProbate Duty, but supposing that this had occurred 40 years ago they would have paid £60,000 per annum. He was taking that from the article referred to, but they might, at any rate, assume fairly that land paid one-fifth. With regard to local burdens these were also a portion of the rent which the land paid to the State and were not in the nature of a tax, and, therefore, the land ought to pay the whole of them. The question at the present moment was whether local burdens on land had gone up beyond other burdens upon the taxpayers throughout the country. He thought that was exceedingly doubtful. Mr. Laing stated that in 1840 land paid 69 per cent of all local burdens, houses 28 per cent, and other properties 23 per cent. At present land paid 23 per cent, houses 53 per cent, railways 14 per cent, and other properties 10 per cent. In asking whether local burdens had gone on increasing, they must make a distinction between urban and rural property; it was perfectly true that they had gone up in past years, but he thought it was not correct to say that they had gone up more than very slightly in the rural districts. In 1871 the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the urban rate averaged 4*s.*, while the rural rate averaged 2*s.* 9*d.* in the pound. He believed the right hon. Gentleman then took in the rural rate the rent of small towns, but if he had eliminated that he would have found that the towns paid 5*s.*, and that 2*s.* 6*d.* was paid in the rural parts. As a matter of fact the rate in towns was greatly increased, and in the rural districts the rate, although it was greater than it was 40 years ago, had been increased very slightly indeed. But there was no necessity for him to argue that point when he had the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself on his side, both with regard to Imperial and local burdens. The right hon. Gentleman had frequently made speeches in that House complaining of the disproportion which existed between Imperial and local burdens taken together upon land and upon personalty. He said that in 1826 charges on real property for local and Imperial taxation were 4*s.* 4d. in the pound, and that they had fallen to 3*s.* 3d. in the pound. It was quite true that the right hon. Gentleman was then arguing precisely the opposite to what he was now maintaining; but at that time he sat upon that side of the House, and, although the right hon. Gentleman argued very cleverly, still there was a distinction between the two statements. If they were to relieve local burdens at the expense of the Imperial Exchequer, the relief ought to be given to the towns rather than to the country districts, the rate in the former being double, and yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer went out of his way to relieve the rural rates. There was nothing more outrageous than the proposal to give a large portion of the amount levied by Probate Duties to the rural districts, and yet to maintain the distinction between Succession and Probate. If they relieved them, then there ought to be no distinction, and if they retained the distiction between the two, then, he said, there ought to be no relief. Probate Duty came entirely from the towns, Succession Duty came entirely from the country; and yet the right hon. Gentleman said he would give this Probate Duty to the rural districts, and that he would maintain this iniquitous distinction between landed property and personalty. Against this enormous grant to the landlords, the Succession Duty was to be raised ½ per cent, which would bring £350,000 per annum; but it was reduced, however, by the right hon. Gentleman having allowed it to be paid in 16 instalments instead of eight, and the probable amount of Succession Duty to be paid into the Imperial Treasury would, therefore, be reduced to £250,000. He was surprised to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, saying that this arrangement was final. He had hoped that it would be only temporary, and that the right hon. Gentleman would have come down and said that he was going to equalize the Succession Duty, and charge ground-rents, and that he was going to see that the mansions of the rich in the country districts were fairly assessed. But he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would say that he was going to do all this next year, and that, if he would do so, Gentlemen on that side of the House would take a different view of the objectionable points in the Budget from what they did at that moment. Why was it necessary to pass this Budget? It seemed to him that it was simply and solely because the landlords declined to give any credit to the Government; they said they must have their money down before they agreed to pass the Local Government Bill, and they insisted upon having it clearly and distinctly stated what they were to receive. He should have thought it would have been more proper to pass the Local Government Bill, and to have continued the grant in aid, and next year to have exhaustively looked into the matter—whether local rates ought to be relieved at the expense of the Treasury, and in what proportion that relief ought to go to the towns and to the rural districts. They must remember that if they gave these taxes over to the counties they should never get them back; they parted with them, not for one year, but for ever. He would only ask those poor dupes, the agricultural labourers, and those poor dupes, the farmers, who were bamboozled by the Primrose League, not to believe that their interest was identical with that of the landowners, whose only object was to feather their own nests at the expense of the taxpayers.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I must apologize to the Committee for speaking so often; but it is necessary that I should employ some little time in answering the arguments and suggestions that have been made in the course of this discussion. On the other hand, I trust that hon. Members, who have spoken, will not consider it any disrespect on my part if I pass by some of the arguments which have been placed before the Committee, as I have but a limited time in which to deal with the great variety of subjects that have been brought to our notice. It is most important that I should say, in reply to the observations that have been made, that in voting for the Resolutions, hon. Members will by no means compromise their perfect freedom of action with regard to the second reading of the Bills which I shall have to bring forward, or with regard to any details which those Bills contain. I trust the Committee will see fit to pass these Resolutions this evening, so as to enable me to introduce the Bills at the earliest possible moment, in order that hon. Members may be enabled to judge what are the precise proposals of the Government, and in what degree and manner the Government have been able to meet the various remarks and suggestions which have been made to them for the modification of these proposals. There has been a long and interesting debate this evening, begun by the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, and concluded by the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton who has just sat down. There is some contrast between those two speeches, both in tone and substance. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian approved of our assigning the Probate Duty to the relief of local taxation, which proposal the hon. Member for Northampton entirely condemned. Nor did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian think it necessary to denounce this Budget as a class measure, or to raise those class controversies which the hon. Member seems so anxious to drag into this discussion. The hon. Member for Northampton has embodied in an extreme form, and in a form which lends itself very favourably to reply, some of the fallacies which have run through one or two even of the more moderate speeches which have been delivered in the course of the evening. I would point out that very conflicting views have been expressed with regard to burdens upon property and the relief to be given to property. At one moment it is said that the landowners will be exclusively relieved, and the hon. Member for Northampton said that this relief was practically a bribe to the landlords. But why to the landlords and not to the householders? The hon. Member, who has been preceded in this matter by a portion of the public Press, says that it is a gift to the squires; but it has been pointed out, in some of the most impartial organs of public opinion, that the greater portion of the relief will go to the towns and not to the country. It has even been made a matter of reproach to us that the relief will go to the towns more than to the rural districts, and yet the hon. Member says—"Look at this great sum which you are going to give from personal property in order to relieve the land!" Does the hon. Member think it will be the landlords who will be relieved by the diminution of rates? The hon. Member implies that it is the landlords who pay the rates, because, if it were not so, the diminution of rates would be no relief to them. That being the view of the hon. Member, then it is the landlords who are paying £26,000,000 of rates towards local taxation, those very landlords, whom at another moment he represents as escaping from their just contribution to public burdens. It is to that point that the hon. Member is driven by his own argument, which shows that it is he, and not the Government, who are on the horns of a dilemma. Either the landlords are paying that enormous sum, or they are not exclusively the persons who will be relieved. As a matter of fact, of course, it is the ratepayer generally who will be relieved, as was admitted distinctly by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, who pointed out to the Committee (and interrupted me, in order to correct the impression that I had not sufficiently explained his meaning) the impression that he did not intend to convey that it was the landlords who paid the rates. Yet in order to create a prejudice against the Budget, and to make an impression out-of-doors, the cry has been raised that this is a rich man's Budget, and that the relief of the ratepayers, in which all classes will share, is simply a relief to the wealthy classes of the community. I protest against that interpretation, which cannot be sustained in argument to the slightest degree. There is a similar juggle in regard to land and houses. At one time hon. Members add houses to land, and at another time they treat them separately, according as it suits the exigencies of their argument. In order to show what a large amount land is paying in proportion to personalty, and, therefore, what a large share it ought to bear in Imperial taxation, houses are added to the land, but the moment it becomes a question of relief they are entirely forgotten, and it is the land only which is said to be about to be relieved. Then there was a third juggle of the hon. Member for Northampton, who says that I myself admitted that we were going to give relief to the land. Yes, but the land does not simply represent the landowner, it represents the farmer as well; and, whatever the hon. Member may think, the farmers know that relief in the matter of rates means relief of the burden which is borne by themselves. The farmers know very well, from sad experience during many years, that they have been suffering from the increase of rates, and that they will be benefited by their reduction. The hon. Member has quoted the views held by me in 1871; but in an earlier portion of the debate I myself pointed out the difference in the situation as between 1871 and the present day. In 1871 the price of wheat was about 56*s.*; now it is about 30*s.* or 31*s.* a quarter. Then the hon. Member alluded to the value of land in 1840, and said that he believed the price of land was then not higher than it is at present. I believe the hon. Member is totally wrong in that view. I have heard of an instance of an estate in Wiltshire, which in 1835 was sold for £35,000, being lately sold for a sum of under £7,000; and I am told, also, that there are a vast number of cases where landed estates only sell at from 10 to 12 years' purchase. You must look at the number of years' purchase which land will fetch, and not merely at the annual value. So much in reply to the hon. Member. But I should like, in regard to the question as to who is to be relieved, to point out how extraordinarily the farmer is affected by even a slight reduction of rates. The farmer is rated on a much larger assessable value in proportion to his income than any other member of the community. The farmer who makes £100 a-year is often rated on a sum of £200, and he has, therefore, to pay rates on twice the amount of his income, while a resident in a town may be paying simply on one-seventh or one-eighth part of his income. It is for that reason that the agricultural interest, as regards rating, has a special claim. I commend that view, also, to the farmers when they look to the relief which they are going to get. If they get a relief of 6*d.* in the pound on the rates, it will make a greater difference to them than a relief of 2*s.* or even 1*s.* in the £1 would make to the householders in many urban districts, and when they are considering any trifling fresh burden that may be put upon them with regard to horses or in other respects, this is a matter which they ought not to forget. In the course of this debate many suggestions have been made as to better taxes which might be imposed than those which are now put forward, and the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Glasgow has suggested the increase of the duty on beer. I should like to know what would be the attitude of hon. Members opposite if we had taxed beer. They would have said that we were attempting to relieve household property at the expense of the general consumer. At all events, we have avoided making, in the least degree, any increase of duty on articles of general consumption. The chief objections taken to our proposals have been with regard to the Wheel Tax and the tax upon vans. I do not know whether the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) was in his place when I made my former statement, but I am glad he is here now. The hon. Member represents those who are mainly interested in this question as poor and suffering tradesmen. I have noticed that the clients of the hon. Gentleman, when he takes up any subject in this House, are always the poorest class in the community. Now, one of these poor struggling tradesmen to whom he has alluded, says, he will lose £50 a-year by the proposal of the Government. That means that he is the owner of 35 vans, because otherwise he could not have to pay £50 under the tax; and this man was held up to the Committee as one of the poorest class of the community who had to contribute to the relief of the bloated ratepayers.

Mr. BROADHURST: I said this tax would hit many of the poorest classes of the community, and I spoke of one person who paid £50 a-year.

Mr. GOSCHEN: My hon. Friend read some letters not particularly complimentary to myself, and he said that those letters came from poor struggling tradesmen, one of whom would suffer a fine of £50. I should like to know why we on our side would not be entitled to use the same argument, and to say that we have put a tax upon brewers' vans, belonging to the richest class of the community, upon the rich Railway Companies, and upon those great establishments which carry furniture from place to place, and that by this means we have relieved the poorest class of suburban ratepayers; and that it was just that these rich people should be taxed for tearing up the roads, instead of the burden falling upon the poor clerks who live in the suburbs and can scarcely make both ends meet. I suggest that my argument would be as sound as that of the hon. Gentleman. Of course, there are anomalies in all cases of this kind. Are there no anomalies in the Income Tax and the Tobacco Duty, where the higher kinds of tobacco pay the same as the lower? Are there no anomalies in the Tea Duty? Those whose unpleasant duty it is to impose these duties can invent no form of taxation which does not involve many anomalies in its collection. With regard to the Wheel Tax, I know that the estimates are extremely diverse, and some that have been put before me seem to prove that there are more vans in the country than could be drawn if there were four times as many horses in it as are known to exist. I am perfectly ready to join issue with hon. Members on the subject; the Government will go fully into the statistics and take a census of the vans, and if it is shown that this is such a wide reaching tax, and that the total amount to be realized is nearer £1,000,000 than I put it, it would be perfectly fair to argue that the amount which I propose to levy should be reduced. I say this having knowledge of the subject, but in the meantime I maintain that those who use the roads are to contribute towards them. That is a doctrine which has not been rejected by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have themselves comtemplated the imposition of a tax on those who use the roads. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) has spoken of our having removed some of the taxation from railways. Yes, but that is a perfectly different point, because there you have not the principle on which the tax on vehicles will rest—namely, that those who use the roads should in part pay for them. In 1882 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, following that principle, gave a subvention of £250,000 in relief of highway rates by handing over a portion of the general taxation for that purpose, and I do not know that it was then contended that the relief was being given to the landlords. The right hon. Gentleman said he only proposed this as a temporary arrangement, and that if it were a settlement of the question it might be right to make a large proposal and to consider the present exemption of all vehicles except those which were called carriages, and that he did not at all exclude them from future taxation. It is clear, from this, that the right hon. Gentleman, although he did not accept the necessity, did not condemn this principle. However, I will give this question, with the assistance of my Colleagues, the best consideration; but I am certainly determined to retain the principle that there ought to be some contribution towards the maintenance of the roads by those who use them. I invite the hon. Member for West Nottingham to consider to what an enormous extent his clients, the poor struggling men possessed of 35 vans, were relieved by the abolition of tolls. That abolition relieved them to a very much greater extent than they will be affected by the measure now proposed; and there are large firms who frankly acknowledge that they have been relieved at the expense of the general taxpayer to the extent of thousands of pounds. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) reminds me that I have not answered my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian as to what would happen if these taxes are not voted by the House. I am prepared to make the frankest declaration on that point. If in the conflict that will take place between the ratepayers and the users of horses and vehicles, these taxes are not passed, there will be so much less relief to the rates. We should not feel it our duty to substitute other taxes in their place. It remains to be seen, whether the general body of ratepayers consider these proposals just—apart from the question of what the amount of the duty should be—whether they are a fair contribution towards the highways. They do not affect the Imperial Budget; but we shall endeavour to the best of our ability to sustain our view that there should be these taxes on horses and vehicles in relief of the general ratepayers for the maintenance of roads and streets. Then we have been sharply attacked in regard to the Succession Duty. It is, I fear, impossible for me at this hour to reply to the right hon. Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) on this question; but it is perhaps less necessary to do so, as I understand that it is to be one of the points upon which, at a later stage, right hon. Gentlemen opposite may be desirous to join issue with us. But I would just point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he omitted, in some of the figures he put before the House, to take into account the increase in the Succession Duty I propose. He also underrated the value of life interest in houses. He pointed out that in one case a freehold house would only pay £25, while a leasehold would pay £150. But under my proposal a leasehold will only pay £75, while a freehold, instead of £25, will pay £37 10*s.*

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The other £75 is still to pay, but to other purposes.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Half the Probate Duty must no longer be taken into account for Imperial purposes; it is taken as a contribution towards local rates, and is not by any analogy to be compared with the Succession Duty. It is essential to take that into consideration. It must never more be said that there is a Probate Duty of 3 per cent for Imperial purposes. It will be 1½ per cent for Imperial purposes; the remainder will go as the contribution of personal property to the relief of local taxation. I hear my right hon. Friend say there is still some difference between us; but then I dispute the figures by which he arrived at £25. I think he will find that the Succession Duty on a house of £5,000 would be more than £25, as he suggested. However, I will not stay to labour the point now. I have heard various suggestions in regard to foreign securities, and the difficulties in the way of carrying out that tax; but, generally, I understand, that the view of the Committee is in favour of the taxation of foreign securities. It is certainly extremely difficult to find a perfect method of carrying it out; but I think our method is practicable and will be found to work well. In Committee on the Bill, however, I shall be prepared to listen to any suggestions from experts and those thoroughly acquainted with the matter, and embody in the Bill any improvements on the proposals we make. I have only now to say that I must remember there was a very interesting speech from the hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), who practically attacked the whole fiscal policy of the country; but I am afraid the hour is too late, and it would be an unprofitable task, to enter into the arguments of the great Fair Trade question, when there are so many matters to deal with; but, were I to do so, I am afraid that my hon. Friend would not find the slightest disposition on my part to meet him in the direction he seemed to anticipate—the reversal of our general fiscal policy. I think it is only frank to make that statement, and I can assure my hon. Friend that it is from no disrespect to him that I do not follow in detail his interesting observations. I have now only to thank the Committee for the general kindly spirit in which the Budget proposals have been discussed. I do not consider that as an augury that some of them will not meet with strong opposition. But I have a strong hope that the Government will be able to pass the measures they have proposed to the House, and to carry out what has been their ambition—to settle and define the distinction between Imperial and local taxation.

Mr. PROVAND said, he only wished to remark in relation to what the right hon. Gentleman said, that his (Mr. Provand's) proposal would be a tax on consumers, that it would be nothing of the kind. The shilling tax on beer would be less than a farthing on each gallon, and therefore could not be charged on consumers, but would fall on the very class the right hon. Gentleman had himself described as the richest class—the Guinnesses and the other brewers.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not say that it would be paid by the consumer; but he was perfectly certain it would be a tax on the consumer.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Income Tax.

(2.) *Resolved,* That towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year commencing on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):—

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Sixpence;

And for every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Three Pence;
In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of Two Pence Farthing;

subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds.

Stamp Duties.

(3.) *Resolved,* That a statement of the amount of nominal capital to be raised by shares of any Company to be registered with limited liability shall be delivered to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, and a statement of the amount of any increase of registered capital of any Company now registered, or to be registered, with limited liability, shall be delivered to the said Registrar, and every such statement shall be charged with an *ad valorem* Stamp Duty of Two Shillings for every One Hundred Pounds and any fraction of One Hundred Pounds over any multiple of One Hundred Pounds of the amount of such capital or increase of capital, as the case may be.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there shall be charged for the use of Her Majesty upon the instruments hereinafter specified the following Stamp Duties (that is to say):—

Foreign or Colonial Share Certificate or other document, being *primâ facie* evidence of, or certifying, the title of any person as proprietor of any share or shares, or stock, or debenture stock, or funded debt of any Foreign or Colonial Company or Corporation where such person is not registered in respect thereof in a register duly kept in the United Kingdom:—

On the occasion of the first delivery thereof in the United Kingdom after the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, and on the occasion of the first delivery thereof in the United Kingdom in any year after the year in which such first delivery shall happen—

	£	s.	d.
Where the nominal amount in money of the share or shares, or stock, or debenture stock, or funded debt, does not exceed Fifty Pounds	0	0	6
Where such nominal amount exceeds Fifty Pounds, for every Fifty Pounds and any fractional part of Fifty Pounds thereof.. ..	0	0	6

Security for money of any Company or Corporation, being a marketable security and transferable by delivery, or security for money by or on behalf of any Foreign or Colonial State, Government, Municipal Body, Corporation, or Company, being a marketable security and transferable by delivery, whatever may be the date thereof, or of the issue thereof, and wherever it may have been made or issued, or the interest may be payable:—

On the occasion of the first transfer thereof by delivery in the United Kingdom after the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, and on the occasion of the first transfer thereof by delivery in the United Kingdom in any year after the year in which such first transfer by delivery shall happen—

	£	s.	d.
Where the amount secured does not exceed Fifty Pounds	0	0	6

	£	s.	d.
Where such amount exceeds Fifty Pounds, for every Fifty Pounds and any fractional part of Fifty Pounds thereof ..	0	0	6

Provided, that the last-mentioned Duty shall not be payable in the case of any security duly stamped with the Duty of One Shilling for every Ten Pounds, and also for any fractional part of Ten Pounds of the money thereby secured, in conformity with section twenty-one of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1885,' but shall be payable upon every other security transferable by delivery, and, in the case of any Stamp Duty having been heretofore paid upon such security, in addition to such Stamp Duty.

Transfer, Assignment, Disposition, or Assignation, otherwise than on mortgage, of any mortgage, bond, debenture, or covenant (being a marketable security), or of any security for money by or on behalf of any Foreign or Colonial State, Government, Municipal Body, Corporation, or Company, (being a marketable security)—

Where the transfer, assignment, disposition, or assignation is on sale, the same *ad valorem* Duties as are now charged under 'The Stamp Act, 1870,' upon a conveyance or transfer or sale of any property by relation to the amount or value of the consideration for the sale—

	£	s.	d.
Where the transfer, assignment, disposition, or assignation is of any other kind than on sale or mortgage	0	10	0

The last-mentioned Duties to be in substitution for the Duty of Six Pence for every One Hundred Pounds, and also for any fractional part of One Hundred Pounds of the amount transferred, assigned, or disposed in any case in which such Duty is imposed by The Stamp Act, 1870.

Contract Note, according to the interpretation of that term in section twenty-six of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1878,'—

	£	s.	d.
Where such Note advises the sale or purchase of any stock or security of the value of one Hundred Pounds or upwards	0	0	6

The last-mentioned Duty to be in substitution for the Duty of one Penny now payable thereon under 'The Stamp Act, 1870.' "

Mr. BARING (London) said, that in accepting at the present moment the passing of this Resolution, he wished to be understood as in no way debarring himself from making remarks upon it when the Resolution came before the House on the next occasion.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

Succession Duty.

"That, in addition to the Duties chargeable in respect of Successions under section ten of "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of every Succession therein referred to, upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, according to the value thereof, the following Duties (that is to say):—

Where the Successor shall be the lineal issue, or lineal ancestor of the predecessor, a Duty at the rate of Ten Shillings per centum upon the value of the interest of the Successor;

In all other cases mentioned in such section, a duty at the rate of One Pound Ten Shillings per centum upon the value of the interest of the Successor;

Provided, That such additional Duty shall not be payable upon the interest of a Successor in Leaseholds passing to him by will or devolution by Law, or in property included in an account according to the value whereof Duty is payable under "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he had great difficulty in following this Resolution as read by the Chairman. It was much to be regretted that these Resolutions had not been printed. This Resolution was of a very technical character, and though he had listened with great attention, he could not gather that it carried out what the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) intimated was his intention. He (Mr. Fowler) understood that the addition to the Succession Duty on lineals was to be ½ per cent and 1½ on collaterals.

The CHAIRMAN said, the Resolution was an addition to the duties now chargeable, that the lineal successor or ancestor was charged 10*s.* per cent, and in all other cases £1 10*s.* per cent on the interest of the successor.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(6.) *Resolved,* That the Duties chargeable under the Acts now in force for charging Duties on Legacies and shares of the personal estates of deceased persons shall not be levied and paid under such Acts in respect of any Legacy payable, or having effect, or being satisfied, out of, or charged or rendered a burden upon, the real or heritable estate of any person dying on or after the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, or any real or heritable estate, or the rents or profits thereof, which such person shall have had any right or power to charge, burden, or affect with the payment of money, or out of or upon any moneys to arise from the sale, mortgage, or other disposition of any such real or heritable estate, or any part thereof, but the Duties under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," and the additional Duties specified in the last preceding

Resolution shall be levied and paid in respect of every such Legacy (whether given by way of annuity or in any other form) as a Succession to personal property.

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

Excise Duties.—Carriages, Trade Carts, Horses, &c., and Horsedealers.

"That the Duties of Excise for Carriages now payable in Great Britain shall cease to be payable on and after the 1st day of January, 1889, and on and after that day there shall be granted, charged, and paid for the use of Her Majesty in Great Britain in each year the following Duties of Excise (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
For every Carriage as hereinafter defined—			
If such Carriage shall have four or more wheels, and shall be drawn, or be adapted or fitted to be drawn, by two or more Horses or Mules, or shall be drawn or propelled by mechanical power	2	2	0
If such Carriage shall have four or more Wheels, and shall be drawn, or be adapted or fitted to be drawn, by one Horse or mule only	1	1	0
If such Carriage shall have less than four Wheels	0	15	0
For every Hackney Carriage as hereinafter defined ..	0	15	0
For every Trade Cart as hereinafter defined of the weight of Two Hundredweight or upwards—			
In respect of each Wheel thereof	0	2	6
And, also, where the weight of any Trade Cart Exceeds Ten Hundredweight, a further Duty of..	1	0	0
For every Locomotive or Traction Engine propelled upon a road	5	0	0
For every Horsedealer	15	0	0
For every Horse which shall start or run for any plate, prize, or sum of money or other thing	5	0	0
For every other Horse or Mule	1	0	0

Subject to exemption from the last mentioned Duty of One Pound in favour of Horses or Mules of the descriptions following (that is to say):—

(1.) A Foal, Colt, or Filly, or Mule which shall never have been used for any purpose of draught or riding;

(2.) A Pony or Mule under the height of Thirteen Hands of Four Inches to each Hand;

(3.) A Horse or Mule kept solely for the purposes of trade or husbandry;

(4.) A Mare kept for the sole purpose of breeding;

(5.) A Horse or Mule kept by a licensed Horsedealer on his premises for sale, and which shall not be let for hire.

For the purposes of this Resolution the following terms therein used shall have the meanings hereinafter assigned to them respectively:—

'Carriage' means and includes any vehicle drawn by a Horse or Mule, or Horses or Mules, or drawn or propelled upon a road or tramway, or elsewhere than upon a railway, by steam or electricity, or any other mechanical power, but shall not include a 'Hackney Carriage,' or 'Trade Cart,' or 'Farm Cart,' as herein defined;

'Hackney Carriage' means any Carriage standing or plying for hire, which is drawn by one Horse or Mule only, and includes any Carriage let for hire by a coachmaker, or other person whose trade or business it is to sell Carriages or to let Carriages for hire, provided that such Carriage is not let for a period amounting to three months or more;

'Trade Cart' means and includes any Waggon, Cart, or other such vehicle drawn by a Horse or Mule, or Horses or Mules, or drawn or propelled upon a road or tramway, or elsewhere than upon a railway, by steam or electricity, or any other mechanical power, which is constructed or adapted for use, and is used, solely for the conveyance of any goods or burden in the course of trade, and whereon the Christian name and surname and place of abode, or place of business of the owner, or the name and style and principal or only place of business of the Company or Firm owning the same shall be visibly and legibly painted in letters of not less than one inch in length;

'Farm Cart' means and includes any Waggon, Cart, or other such vehicle according to the preceding definition of 'Trade Cart,' such definition being construed as if the words 'husbandry or the business of a market gardener' were therein substituted for the word 'trade.'"

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he wished to know to what Members were committed if they assented to this Resolution. Did they, by assenting to the Resolution, assent to the principle of the Wheel Tax? When the Resolution was embodied in a Bill, would Members be perfectly free to move the rejection of the Wheel Tax altogether?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, certainly. He thought he had explained it must be distinctly understood that no one was in the slightest degree fettered by the passing of the Resolutions. Right hon. Gentlemen on the other side were perfectly aware that the Government were only following precedent in taking the Resolutions without discussion in the same way that a Bill was received when introduced.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, it was his intention to oppose the Wheel Tax. He might add it was exceedingly inconvenient that printed copies of the Resolutions were not placed in the hands of Members. Consulting, as he always desired to consult, the convenience of the Committee, he would not oppose the Resolution now; but he was utterly opposed to the Cart Wheel Tax in principle, and his opposition would not in the slightest degree be disarmed by any modification.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, in reference to what was made a complaint as of apparent neglect in not having the Resolutions printed, he might say it had been the invariable custom not to print them until after they were passed. He did not say it was a good custom and that it was not capable of modification, but he had only followed the rule.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, it was evident there was objection to the Resolutions being printed before the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his statement, because that might very much affect the various trades on whom the taxes were to fall, but after the statement was made there could be no reason why, before the next stage, the Resolutions should not be printed.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was a useful suggestion; but it was entirely novel and it had never yet been followed. However, so far as the Government were concerned, they would be glad to follow t in future.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked, would the Wheel Tax be in a separate Bill?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, yes; he proposed to introduce a separate Bill containing the Horse and Wheel Taxes, separating them, as they were for local purposes, from the general Budget for Imperial purposes.

Sir WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) said, there was one matter in reference to the Resolution on which he would be glad to be informed. Would a farmer who ran his horse, a hunter probably, in a farmers' race, be chargeable with the £5 as a racehorse?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the Resolutions were always drawn to cover generally the whole question, while exemptions and modifications were introduced in the clauses of the Bill. There was no intention that a farmers' horse, entered for a farmers' hunt race, should be treated as a racehorse.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked whether he understood rightly that hackney carriages were specially treated?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, hackney carriages were under the Carriage Tax; they were not exempt, and they were already taxed.

Question put and *agreed to.*

(8.) *Resolved,* That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

APPENDIX I.

FINAL BALANCE SHEET, 1888-9, AS PROPOSED BY THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Estimate of Revenue.			1888-89
I.—PRODUCE OF TAXES.		£	£
1. Customs		19,800,000	
Add,—			
Tax on Bottled Wines		125,000	19,925,000
2. Excise		25,560,000	
Deduct,—	£		
Revision of Carriage Tax	30,000		
Repeal of Hawkers' Licences	25,000		
		55,000	25,505,000
3. Stamps	12,740,000		
Deduct,—			
One-half Probate Duty, to be handed over to Local Authorities	1,420,000		
		11,320,000	
Add,—			
Increase to Succession Duty	50,000		
Increased stringency in Collection	50,000		
Tax on Foreign Securities and Bonds to Bearer	200,000		
Tax on Contract Notes	50,000		
Tax on Companies Issue	110,000		
		460,000	
			11,780,000
4. Land Tax			1,046,000
5. House Duty			1,890,000
6. Property and Income Tax		13,820,000	
Deduct,—			
Allowance in respect of Schedule A.	20,000		
Remission of 1*d.*	1,550,000		
		1,570,000	
			12,250,000
Produce of Taxes - - - £.			*72,396,000*
II.—PRODUCE OF NON-TAX REVENUE.			
1. Post Office			8,800,000
2. Telegraph Service			2,000,000
3. Crown Lands			390,000
4. Interest, &c., of Purchase Money of Suez Canal Shares, Sardinian Loan, &c.			241,000
5. Miscellaneous			3,000,000
Produce of Non-Tax Revenue - - £.			*14,431,000*
Total Revenue - - £.			86,827,000

APPENDIX I.—*Cont.*

FINAL BALANCE SHEET, 1888-9, AS PROPOSED BY THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Estimate of Expenditure.		1888-89
I.—CONSOLIDATED FUND.		£
1. Debt Charges:		
A. Inside the Fixed Charge:		
Interest, &c.		26,000,000
B. Outside the Fixed Charge:		
Interest, &c., on Exchequer Bonds (Suez), and Cape Railway Bonds..		214,000
2. Other Charges on the Consolidated Fund		1,647,000
Total Consolidated Fund - - £.		*27,861,000*
II.—SUPPLY.		
1. Army		16,700,300
2. Army (Ordnance Factories)		30,000
3. Navy		13,082,800
4. Civil Services	£ 18,145,293	
Deduct,—		
Grants in aid of Disturnpiked Roads	295,000	
		17,850,293
5. Customs and Inland Revenue (Collection)		2,745,549
6. Post Office		5,666,666
7. Telegraph Service		2,036,836
8. Packet Service		641,500
Total Supply - - £.		*58,753,944*
Total Expenditure - - £.		86,614,944

Estimated Surplus .. .. .. £ 212,056

APPENDIX II.

ACTUAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF 1887-8 UP TO 31ST MARCH.

INCOME.	YEAR. to 31st Mar., 1888.
	£
Customs	19,630,000
Excise	25,620,000
Stamps	13,000,000
Land Tax	1,030,000
House Duty	1,940,000
Property and Income Tax	14,440,000
Post Office	8,650,000
Telegraph Service	1,950,000
Crown Lands	390,000
Interest on Purchase Money of Suez Canal Shares, Sardinian Loan, &c.	242,479
Miscellaneous	2,909,775
TOTAL INCOME	89,802,254

EXPENDITURE.	
CONSOLIDATED FUND CHARGES.	£
Permanent Charge of Debt	26,000,000
Interest on Exchequer Bonds (Suez) and Cape Railway Bonds	213,911
Other Ordinary Charges on Consolidated Fund	1,758,084
TOTAL	*27,971,995*
SUPPLY SERVICES.	
Army	18,167,196
Navy	12,325,357
Miscellaneous Civil Services	18,210,000
Customs and Inland Revenue Departments	2,707,746
Post Office	5,403,438
Telegraph Service	1,940,012
Packet Service	697,901
TOTAL SUPPLY SERVICES	*59,451,650*
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	87,423,645

Excess of Income over Expenditure on the Year - £2,378,609.

BAIL (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[Bill 172.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, the proposal of which the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had given Notice, to refer this Bill to the Standing Committee on Law, involved great and important considerations, and he (Dr. Cameron) hoped the Motion would not be made now. If it was made he must object.

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [6th April] *reported.*

Resolutions read a first and second time.

First Three Resolutions *agreed to.*

Fourth Resolution.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury to be good enough to postpone the Resolution until Thursday, or Monday, as he was anxious to obtain from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs some information beyond that he could obtain in answer to a Question in reference to the state of things at Nyassa. People were imprisoned there, and in danger of their lives, some of his constituents among them.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, the hon. Member could obtain the information in Committee on the next Vote, the Foreign Office Vote. Still, he would not object to postpone the Vote, if the hon. Member particularly desired it.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he did not know when that Vote might come on.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, it would be the first Vote on the next occasion of going into Supply.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he would prefer to raise the question on the Report of the Resolution.

Resolution *postponed.*

Fifth Resolution.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, he desired, on this Resolution, to call attention to the state of Holyhead Harbour, and he regretted he had not had the opportunity in Committee. It was the only Harbour of Refuge on the Welsh seaboard, with the exception of Milford Haven; it was a great national undertaking, and had cost £1,500,000. But this expenditure had been largely unproductive, because the original design had not been carried out. The great Platters Rock in the centre of the New Harbour had not been removed, so that the harbour was only partially used, and on occasions when most necessary, during stormy weather, it was scarcely used at all, as ships of heavy tonnage could only enter at full tide. During the storms of last winter it was impossible for ships to enter the harbour, and, as a Harbour of Refuge, it was useless. The removal of those rocks was part and parcel of the original design, and he understood the Government had sent down engineers to inspect the harbour. He believed he was rightly informed when he said that the engineers found that not only was the work necessary, but it could be accomplished at much less cost than was originally anticipated. He called attention to the subject last year, and the then Secretary to the Board of Trade admitted that the work was very necessary, but could not then be undertaken, inasmuch as a sum of £5,000 had been allotted in the Vote for Harbour Dredging. He would now venture to repeat his request to the President of the Board of Trade to carry out the promise of the late Secretary, and take up the subject. He admitted it would be necessary to spread the expenditure over several years, but until the work was undertaken the expenditure of the past was deprived of its value. That was not merely the wish of the people of Holyhead; it was the anxious desire of the Steam Packet Companies and the general shipping community, and he earnestly trusted the right hon. Gentleman would appreciate the desirability of completing this great national undertaking. He also ventured to call attention to another point. At present, there was no arrangement of sound signals by which ships in foggy weather could enter within the breakwater and know their position. This had been done, he believed, in regard to Government steam packets, but not with regard to the ships of other Companies. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to press this upon the attention of the officials of the Board of Trade.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.) said, he did not quite understand the second point raised by the hon. Member; but if he would communicate with him he would certainly give his attention to it, and if anything could be done to meet the request it should be done. Hon. Members must understand that the question raised did not in any degree relate to the ordinary harbour at Holyhead, that which was used by the Mail Steamship Companies and the London and North Western Railway Company; it related only to the outer harbour, the Harbour of Refuge. No doubt, this might be improved by the removal of the rock alluded to; but he could not admit that the expenditure would be anything like the sum the hon. Member had formerly mentioned. Indeed, on the authority of Sir John Hawkshaw, who had investigated the matter, he was assured the expenditure was estimated at no less than £250,000. Certainly he had not been able to satisfy himself that he could properly recommend to the Treasury the expenditure of such a sum on the removal of these rocks. Sir George Nares, the Adviser to the Board, had reported that if the rock was removed to the depth of 26 feet, the anchorage ground of 400 acres would not be materially increased, because over the rock there would not be sufficient deposit to render the space available for anchorage. He was sorry he could not give a more favourable answer; but with regard to what was stated last year, his hon. Friend the then Secretary to the Board of Trade only undertook that the subject should be investigated, and this was subsequently done by Sir John Hawkshaw. He did not undertake that the work should be done, because he did not then know the cost. The hon. Member expressed an opinion that £10,000 would do it. [Mr. T. E. Ellis: No.] The hon. Member was so reported in the newspapers and in *Hansard.* There was a wide difference between that estimate and £250,000.

Sir EDWARD REED (Cardiff) said, he regretted the retrogressive character of these remarks. The removal of the Platters Rock had always been in contemplation, but he should be disposed to doubt that the sum of £10,000 was ever put forward as the estimated cost. He should also doubt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that the removal of the rock was designed to give increased anchorage ground. He asserted that the removal would not do so, and that implied the presumption that those who desired the removal desired it supposing that thereby there would be increased anchorage. That had not, so far as he understood, ever been the intention of those who recommended the removal. The fact was, the Platters Rock was a serious drawback to the use of Holyhead as a Harbour of Refuge, and until it was removed the value of the harbour was very doubtful. He was sorry to find the right hon. Gentleman took such an unfavourable view of the matter. He should like to ask what was the date of Sir John Hawkshaw's Report, because it would be within the knowledge of many hon. Members that the removal of submarine rocks had within a recent period been made a work that could be accomplished far more economically than heretofore?

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: It was about a couple of months ago.

Sir EDWARD REED continued: If the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was to be taken as a complete retrogression of the Government from any undertaking to remove the rock, then the subject must be made matter for further consideration by Committee or other means. He would not prolong the discussion now; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take every possible step to satisfy himself, before abandoning the idea of removal, that there was not a mistake in the estimate of the cost. It was some years since he directed particular attention to the matter; but his impression was that the removal could be effected for a much less expenditure than the right hon. Gentleman mentioned.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he quite admitted that the removal of the rock would be an improvement of the harbour, and if hon. Members could show that it could be done for a more reasonable sum than the figure he mentioned, and that it was much exaggerated, then he would reconsider the matter.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Fifth to Thirteenth Resolutions *agreed to.*

Fourteenth Resolution *postponed.*

Fifteenth Resolution *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolutions to be considered upon *Thursday.*

MOTION.

——o——

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.) said, he wished to ask the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) a question in reference to his Motion for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. He understood that, at Question time, the hon. Member had given Notice of his intention to postpone that Motion, set down for to-morrow, to May 1. Was it his intention to bring on the Motion then, or did he mean to postpone it from time to time until the close of the Session and perhaps of the Parliament?

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) said, it was his full intention to bring on the Motion; but he would not do so unless he got a favourable opportunity under circumstances that would ensure a discussion in proportion to the importance of the subject.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMAN'S PANEL).

Ordered, That the Committee of the Chairman's Panel have leave to make a Report:—

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman accordingly *reported* from the Chairman's Panel: That they had appointed Mr. Osborne Morgan to act as the Chairman of the Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 10th April, 1888.

MINUTES.] — New Writ Issued — *For* Limerick Borough, *v.* Henry Joseph Gill, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [April 9] *reported.*

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Withdrawn*—Sutton and Wimbledon Railway.*

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Customs and Inland Revenue * [202].

Second Reading—Municipal Franchise (Belfast) * [138], *put off;* Wages (Ireland) * [139], *put off.*

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Copyright (Musical Compositions) * [156], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Vagrant Act Amendment * [125]; Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment * [141].

DEATH OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE GERMAN EMPEROR.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received through the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a communication from the German Ambassador in London, which he felt sure that the House would wish him to read:—

"The Imperial German Parliament passed a Resolution unanimously at their sitting of the 19th instant, to the effect that the expressions of veneration for our deceased Monarch, and of participation in the grief of the German People manifested by the House of Commons, have called forth the deepest sympathy and the liveliest gratitude throughout Germany, and constitute a signal proof of the friendly relations existing between the two Peoples."

QUESTIONS.

——o——

EGYPT—THE DAIRA SANIEH OF THE KHEDIVE.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that the Daira Sanieh of the Khedive (the great land and sugar industry of Egypt) is in the habit of letting its lands by auction, and that, although it binds itself in writing that the last day of the auction shall be "the definite close of the auction," and "that every subsequent offer shall be refused," it is in the constant habit of breaking its undertaking by turning out the fellaheen after they have been declared tenants and let into possession under the auction, and even after they have bought seed and ploughed and cultivated the land, in direct contravention of the Judgment of the Government Court of Inquiry held on the Daira in 1886, which judgment, after calling special attention to this practice, censured the French and English controllers for not having prevented it in the past, and warned them "to exercise stricter supervision for the future;" whether he knows that, as a result of the treatment by the Daira of its tenants, up to the end of 1887 (the close of the auction), the Daira was unable to let a single acre of the sugar lands for 1888 in eight out of nine districts, and only 95 acres in the ninth district (the number offered to be let being about 25,000), and that, during the last 35 days of the said auctions, the Daira sent three special Commissioners to aid the Chief Governor in each of the districts to let the lands, but that the fellaheen refused to take a single acre except as aforesaid; and, whether Lieutenant Colonel Money, Inspector of the Daira, has thrown up his appointment rather than assent to these practices?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): No circumstances corresponding to the statements implied by the Question of the hon. Gentleman have been reported to Her Majesty's Government.

SAMOA—KING MALIETOA.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he now knows where the German Government have conveyed King Malietoa of Samoa; and, if he does not know, whether Her Majesty's Government will endeavour to obtain such information from the authorities at Berlin?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Governor of Lagos, on the 2nd of February, reported that a German gun vessel had called there, having previously left King Malietoa at Cameroons.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—APPLECROSS BAY.

DR. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will make inquiries as to the truth of the statement that Lord Middleton has placed several hundred posts, with iron hooks attached, across Applecross Bay; whether these posts will prevent herring fishing in the bay; and, whether Lord Middleton is legally justified in thus depriving the local fishermen of the chance of fishing for herrings in the said bay?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Inquiry has been made into this matter, from which it appears that Lord Middleton has placed about 36 posts across the north side and towards the head of Applecross Bay, to prevent salmon poaching. I am informed that these posts would not in any way interfere with or hinder herring fishing, if such fishing took place there, which I am led to understand it never does. I could not give the hon. Member any legal opinion on the matter.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—THE LEWIS TELEGRAPH CABLE.

DR. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Postmaster General, When it is his intention to have the telegraph cable between Lewis and the mainland, which has been out of order for several weeks, repaired; and, whether, having regard to the large fishing interests of the Island, which are mainly dependent for the sale of fish on telegraphic intelligence, he intends to lay a new cable instead of that now out of order?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, the cable ship belonging to the Post Office was now engaged in the repair of the Stornoway cable. She had been until very recently under repair. The state of affairs referred to in the Question had been brought to his notice about a fortnight ago by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill); and he had given orders that, as soon as the cable ship had finished her repairs, the first duty she should take in hand would be to repair this cable.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEMES UNDER THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, in future, when any scheme of the Charity Commissioners involving any alteration of the Trusts of a Charity is laid before the House, the Charity Commissioners will print with it, and annex to it, a short *précis* of the original Trusts of the Founders and Benefactors, with a reference to the volume and page of the Reports where they are given in full; and also state, with the scheme, what amount of property or income it is proposed to deal with?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): Schemes framed under the provisions of the Endowed Schools Acts are not laid before Parliament by the Charity Commissioners, but by the Committee of Council on Education. It would be in some cases impossible, and in others misleading, to furnish with every scheme laid before the House of Commons a short *précis* of the original Trusts, &c. But the Charity Commissioners will have much pleasure in furnishing, whenever they are invited by the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education to do so, for the information of the House of Commons, a written statement explanatory of any scheme which has been laid before the House.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 1.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. GILL) (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many inquiries under the 1st section of the Criminal Law Amendment Act have been held in Ireland up to the present; and, to what extent have these inquiries resulted in obtaining evidence leading to the detection or conviction of the perpetrators of crime or outrage?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Six inquiries under the 1st section of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, have been commenced. Three of these have been concluded. In one, a murder case, one man has been sentenced to death and another is now on his trial. In the second, a case of shooting at, with intent to murder, a person has been committed for trial at the present Wicklow Assizes; and, in the third, a case of "Boycotting," a prosecution is about to be instituted. The remaining three inquiries are still in progress. I would, however, beg to point out to the hon. Member who puts this Question that a comprehensive Return relating to such inquiries is, in accordance with the requirements of the statute, published quarterly in *The Dublin Gazette.*

LAND JUDGES' COURT (IRELAND)—ARREARS—JUDGMENT OF MR. JUSTICE MONROE.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. GILL) (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that Mr. Justice Monroe, in the Land Judges' Court last week, having abated by 30 per cent the rents of the tenants on the Bomford Estate, in the County of Westmeath, and having been applied to by the tenants' counsel to wipe out all arrears of old rents due by said tenants, decided as follows:—

> "There was not the slightest use in holding on to arrears on small holdings of this kind. He (Mr. Justice Monroe) would make an order that the year's rent of 1887 should be paid, less abatements of 30 per cent, or such abatements as the Land Commissioners might fix, before the 1st of May, and that all arrears should be wiped out;"

And, whether, in view of this judicial action, and of the great number of ejectment decrees obtained recently by landlords in Ireland for non-payment of arrears of rent, Her Majesty's Government will reconsider their decision not to deal with the arrears question by legislation this Session?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I beg to ask him whether Mr. Justice Monroe and the other Judges in the Landed Estates Court have not this power of remitting the arrears on 1,500 estates in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): In answer to the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, I believe there is a very large number of estates in the Landed Estates Court. I will not pledge myself to the exact number. In regard to the Question on the Paper, I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the report. Mr. Justice Monroe appears to have been of opinion that it was expedient to remit the arrears, not on the ground that they were inequitable, but that they were irrecoverable. He was acting as owner, and many other owners have come to a similar conclusion; but I fail to see that this fact has any material bearing on the policy of the Government with respect to arrears.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked, had not the Judge referred to granted the application of the tenants, notwithstanding that the owners objected?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked for Notice of the Question.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 1.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. Gill) (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can give the House any information as to the purpose of the inquiry under Section 1 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, which has been instituted within the past month at Carrick-on-Shannon by Mr. Joyce, Resident Magistrate?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The inquiry in question has reference to a Boycotting conspiracy.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 1.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N) (for Mr. Gill) (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. Matthew J. Barrett, of the firm of Messrs. J. Barrett and Company, Carrick-on-Shannon, and Mr. Thomas Costello, manager of the business establishment of Mr. Edward Costello, Carrick-on-Shannon, were sentenced to three terms of imprisonment for contempt of Court, in refusing to give evidence at the inquiry under Section 1 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, recently held in that town; and, what is the reason that, on being brought up a fourth time on Tuesday last, they were unconditionally discharged, although they still refused to give evidence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The informations and facts connected with this case were laid before the Attorney General for Ireland, who directed the prosecution of the person whom the informations and facts appeared to him to point to as the principal offender. The requirements of justice did not demand the further detention of the persons named in the Question, who were accordingly discharged.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONTRACTS FOR BAYONETS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, What number of bayonets have up to now been supplied by Messrs. Wilkinson under their contract; and, whether any alteration has taken place in the test which these bayonets were to satisfy, and which was described by him in this House last year?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Delivery of the bayonets supplied by Messrs. Wilkinson has been necessarily suspended, in consequence of certain changes having been made in the fittings of the hilt on the recommendation of a Special Committee. The same Committee has also recommended that the "spring," or shortening by vertical pressure, should be reduced from one inch to seven-eighths of an inch. These changes will make no alteration in the price.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—THE BUDGET ESTIMATES.

Mr. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If the Estimates of the Indian Budget are likely to be seriously disturbed by the rates at which the Secretary of State is now disposing of bills and transfers: and, if so, what would be the amount of the further deficit for the year at the present rate of exchange?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The average rate for 1887-8 was 16·898*d.* per rupee; the Budget rate is 16·9*d.*; and last week's rate 16·4*d.* It is, however, impossible to judge from the sale of bills for a single week what will be the average rate of exchange for the year, and whether the Estimates will be seriously disturbed.

INLAND REVENUE—PROBATE DUTY IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Mr. HOYLE (Lancashire. S.E., Heywood) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Statement showing the amount now contributed to the Imperial Revenue from personal property in the form of Probate Duty by each of the counties in England and Wales.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I regret that it is impossible to give such a Return as the hon. Member asks for. I should be very glad to possess, and make public, information as to the amount now contributed to the Imperial Revenue from personal property in the form of Probate Duty in each of the counties in England and Wales; but from the manner in which probate is taken out it is impossible to allocate the duty paid to the various counties.

Mr. HOYLE asked, Whether the Returns did not show where the property was situated on which Probate was paid?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not know whether the accounts showed this or not; but certainly there was no classification. For instance, the amount of personal property might be in Foreign Bonds or in Colonial Bonds. It would be impossible to allocate the various forms of property possessed by a particular person to a county.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked, Whether the right hon. Gentleman would be good enough to give the total of Probate Duty, if not the details?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The total of the whole of the Probate Duty is, I think, £4,000,000, or thereabouts.

CIVIL SERVICE—STAFF OF THE CHIEF OFFICIAL RECEIVER IN BANKRUPTCY—CERTIFICATES.

Mr. PRICE (Monmouth, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will take the necessary steps to obtain Treasury sanction to the issue of Civil Service Certificates, under the provisions of the Order in Council dated the 4th of June, 1870, to such member of the staff of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy as he may recommend, and who may be within the meaning of that order?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade are willing to consider any recommendations which may be made to them by the Chief Official Receiver; but I regret that I cannot give such an undertaking as that referred to by the hon. Member.

LICENSING DUTIES — SIX-DAY LICENCES — THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the abatement in the Licence Duties now allowed to those who voluntarily close on Sundays, or on other days one hour earlier than the law requires, will still be allowed under the licensing provisions of the Local Government Bill?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Bill will make no alteration in the law in reference to the matters to which the hon. Member's Question refers.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX.

Colonel EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether occupiers of small holdings who let out their carts to other small occupiers for agricultural purposes would be liable for the Wheel Tax for such carts?

Mr. GURDON (Norfolk, Mid) asked, Whether county road surveyors, who in the exercise of their duty had to use their own or their neighbours' carts on the highway, would be liable to the tax?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am asked by several Questions practically to interpret the clauses of the Bill, which is not finally drawn, and which is not yet before the House. It is somewhat difficult for me to answer all those Questions in detail, and I should be sorry to convey any false impression. With regard to carts, I have to say that if they are let out solely for agricultural purposes they are exempt from the proposed Wheel Tax, to whomsoever they belong. I will consider the point suggested by my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Gurdon).

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX.

Mr. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House an Estimate of the number of horses used for haulage that will be subject to the new Horse Tax; also the number of horses used for agricultural purposes that will be exempt from the Tax.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked, with reference to horses used for agricultural purposes, whether the right hon. Gentleman would take into consideration the case of farmers whose horses were mainly used for agricultural purposes, but occasionally for other purposes; and, whether he would make an exemption of one horse in the case of each occupier who worked his land for profit?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): When the Bill is laid before the House, hon. Members will have the opportunity of seeing to what extent the exemptions will be granted. It would be more convenient then to answer such Questions. I beg hon. Members on both sides of the House, with regard to these taxes, to consider whether they can see their way to postponing Questions for a week or 10 days, until I have had an opportunity of consulting the different deputations which I have to receive: it would facilitate any reply I have to make. In reply to the hon. Member who put the first Question, I have to say that no horse used exclusively for haulage will be subject to the new duty. By haulage, I mean the drawing of vehicles other than carriages. It is estimated that there are about 1,000,000 horses used for agricultural purposes that will be totally exempt.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that many van owners keep vans and carts expressly for the purpose of lending them to tradesmen whose own vans and carts are temporarily under repair; and, whether, being substitutes merely for tax paying vehicles, the vehicles so lent will be liable to the Tax?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am afraid I do not see how any exemption can be made in this case; but, as I have stated, I shall have an opportunity of seeing some deputations and hearing their views on this subject. Of course, there must be exceptional cases in the operation of every tax.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT, 1882, SECTION 12.

Colonel EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will consent to the introduction of a clause into the Local Government Bill repealing so much of Section 12 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, as refers to the disqualification of persons in holy orders and regular ministers of dissenting chapels from sitting on Councils?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): There will be no indisposition on the part of the Government to assent to an amendment of the Local Government Bill to the effect that Section 12 of the Municipal Corporations Act shall be excepted from the provisions of that Act which are to apply to the elections of the new Councils proposed to be constituted.

RIVER THAMES—UNLOADING RUBBISH IN THE ESTUARY.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that barges are in the practice of loading rubbish from London and unloading in the estuary of the Thames between Southend and Leigh; that, in consequence, fishing grounds are spoilt, and nets torn up and destroyed, to the ruin of the fishing industry of the district; and, whether he is prepared to state what steps will be taken to stop this practice?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have directed inquiries to be made by one of their Inspectors in the locality referred to by the hon. and gallant Member, and I hope to receive his Report in a few days.

ADMIRALTY—THE DIRECTOR OF NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.

Sir WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of times the Director of Naval Construction has visited the Royal Dockyards at Home on duty in the course of the last two years; and, if he will furnish to the House a Report drawn up by the Director of Naval Construction as to the actual progress made in the building of ships in the several Dockyards as compared with their estimated advancement, the Report being made up to the end of the last financial year?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): I see no advantage in laying such a Return as the hon. Gentleman asks for in the first part of the Question. If he will read the Memorandum which I laid upon the Table of the House relating to the Navy Estimates, and look at the details of Vote 8, he will there find the information he requires.

ADMIRALTY — THE DIRECTOR OF NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.

Sir WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) asked, Whether the Director of Naval Construction is directly responsible that new ships built or building in the Royal Dockyards are constructed in accordance with the designs, specifications, and weights as approved by the Board of Admiralty; and, whether he is required personally to inspect and certify from time to time, during the building or on the completion of such ships, that the progress of work on them (in accordance with approved designs, specifications, and weights) is commensurate with the recorded expenditure?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The duties of Director of Naval Construction are laid down at length in Parliamentary Paper C. 4,615 of 1886, page 5; and a perusal of those instructions will give more accurately than a short Parliamentary answer the duties of Director of Naval Construction and Director of Dockyards.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—DISALLOWANCE OF SPECIAL RULES IN SCOTLAND.

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the statement appearing in *The Times* of the 9th instant, to the effect that he has refused his sanction to certain new Special Rules proposed for Fife, Clackmannan, and Stirlingshire, under the Mines Act, and objected to on the part of the miners, is correct.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The statement is not correct. I have received objections to the Special Rules in question, and they are now under consideration.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — THE DISTURBANCES IN KILRUSH—TRIAL OF PRISONERS—MR. IRWIN, R.M.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Daily News*, that at the time of the collision between the military and police and the people in the town of Kilrush on Sunday, all the military and police arrangements were under the supreme command of Mr. Irwin, Resident Magistrate; whether Mr. Irwin, in conjunction with Captain Welch, Resident Magistrate, tried on the 8th of November last, in the said town of Kilrush, under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, in one batch, 18 persons, who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, accompanied in some instances with hard labour and without power of appeal; and, whether Mr. Irwin has, between the 17th of August, 1887, and the 16th of March, 1888, tried in all 132 persons under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is the case that on the occasion in question Mr. Irwin was, as Resident Magistrate, in charge of the military and police. It also appears to be the case that he, in conjunction with Captain Welch, Resident Magistrate, tried a number of persons in November last at Kilrush charged with unlawful assembly. Several of them were sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labour; some were acquitted, and in a considerable number of the cases "no rule" was marked. There is no official record kept of the number of persons tried by Resident Magistrates.

MR. MAC NEILL: Will the Government give a Return of the number?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That Question, or one like it, was asked early in the Session, and I declined to give it.

MR. MAC NEILL: I want to know whether, under the administration of Earl Spencer, the judicial and executive offices of magistrates were not kept distinct?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They were kept distinct, exactly as they are kept distinct now. I am not aware that there was any difference.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I desire to ask the Chief Secretary, Whether the Captain Welch mentioned in the Question is the same magistrate who, in conjunction with Colonel Turner, at Ennis, committed an assault on the people last Sunday; whether the people who were sabred, wounded, and batoned by the orders of Captain Welch and Colonel Turner were already prisoners of war; whether they had surrendered and offered no resistance; whether, at the moment their names were being taken, Colonel Turner and Captain Welch ordered the soldiers to charge them with their swords and the police to beat them with their batons; whether the right hon. Gentleman has received any Report of the proceedings at Ennis last Sunday; and, if so, if he will give the House the benefit of that Report?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has raised a large number of points in his Question of rather a novel character. He asks me whether certain persons at Ennis were not prisoners of war. My impression is that you can only have prisoners of war when two countries are at war with each other; and that I apprehend is not the case at the present moment in Ireland. The accounts I have of what passed at Ennis do not at all agree with the sketch which the hon. Gentleman has just given to the House.

MR. MAC NEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman give us his account?

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Has the right hon. Gentleman seen the account of the correspondent of *The Irish Times*, who was wounded in the charge?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I have not seen that.

MR. MAC NEILL: The right hon. Gentleman, I think, does not apprehend my Question. I want to know whether, under Earl Spencer's *régime*, the functions of the Resident Magistrates were kept distinct in this way—that the executive functions were wielded by some Resident Magistrates, and the judicial functions by others; and, whether Earl Spencer has not publicly stated that the union of the executive and judicial functions of Resident Magistrates would lead to grave mischief in the administration of public justice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not acquainted with all Earl Spencer's utterances regarding the Crimes Act of 1882; but I should be extremely surprised to learn that Earl Spencer ever laid down a rule, never to be departed from, that because a magistrate tried prisoners in November he was, therefore, debarred from exercising the executive functions which every magistrate in England, Scotland, and Ireland possesses, in April of the following year.

MR. MAC NEILL: Would I be in Order, Sir, in reading Earl Spencer's words?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that the subject referred to arises out of the Question on the Paper.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I should like to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether he justifies the action of the Resident Magistrate and the commanding officer of the troops in attacking unarmed citizens after all resistance against the armed forces had ceased?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, all unnecessary attacks are to be deprecated.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The right hon. Gentleman told us yesterday he had received no official information. I would ask him if he has now received it, and if he can tell the House what that information officially is?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On what special point?

MR. BRADLAUGH: With reference to the attack on Sunday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Which attack?

MR. BRADLAUGH: The attack by the military and police on the people at Ennis, when several were wounded.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the hon. Gentleman mean the attack where one of the newspaper correspondents was hurt?

MR. BRADLAUGH: Yes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I understand happened was this. There was an illegal assembly in a warehouse outside Ennis. The police assembled there to find out the names of the persons who were present; and when they were engaged in the exercise of their duty they were received with a shower of stones not only from the warehouse itself, but also from the neighbouring houses. Under these circumstances, the Resident Magistrates very properly ordered the police to charge.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: I beg to give Notice that to-morrow I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman whether——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! If the hon. Gentleman will put that Question on the Paper in the usual way, no doubt it will be answered.

MR. MAC NEILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that Colonel Turner telegraphed to the Editor of *The Irish Times* expressing his deep regret at the injuries which had been inflicted upon the correspondent of that journal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am, of course, very glad to give all the information in my power to the House. I may point out that these Questions as to what occurred at Ennis are supposed to arise out of the Question on the Paper regarding Kilrush; but I do not press the point. I have no information that Colonel Turner telegraphed his regret. If he did, I have no doubt he felt it.

Subsequently,

MR. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary, Whether his attention had been called to the statement of the wounded correspondent of *The Irish Times*, in which he says—

> "At the time I was standing in the doorway the 3rd Hussars were drawn up in front"——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is practically a Notice of a Question; and it is quite competent for the hon. Gentleman to put it upon the Paper.

MR. GILL: But, Sir, with reference to the statement of the Chief Secretary that a shower of stones was thrown, I would call his attention to this specific statement—namely, that *The Irish Times*' correspondent says there was no disorder, no hooting or cheering, and no missile thrown.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My attention was not called to the article, as I think I stated before, and I have not seen it. But the statement which the hon. Gentleman has just made is in direct contradiction to the information which I have received, which indicates that the charge was a direct consequence of a shower of stones from the upper windows of the building.

MR. GILL: As the right hon. Gentleman says his attention has not been called to the statement of the correspondent of *The Irish Times*, will he consider and examine that statement as being the statement of a reputable witness, one who was present on the occasion, and who suffered in the *mêlée?*

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall, of course, be glad to examine that and any further statements which the hon. Gentleman may bring under my notice.

MR. GILL: Then may I put one further Question to the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ROUNDSTONE (GALWAY).

MR. FOLEY (Galway, Connemara) asked the Postmaster General, When it is intended to fill up the vacancy to the office of Postmaster at present existing at the Post Office of Roundstone (Galway), to relieve the inhabitants of the district from the great inconvenience of having to travel a distance of 10 miles to the neighbouring district of Clifden to obtain Post Office Orders or get them changed?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Notice given by the hon. Member is not sufficient to enable me to procure certain information from Ireland, without which I am unable to answer the Question. I will endeavour to do on Friday.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—CHARITABLE FUNDS—THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Treasury to make Regulations under the National Debt (Conversion) Act, 1888, whereby the Charity Commissioners may on behalf of Trustees consent to the exchange of Consolidated Three per Cent Stock or Reduced Three per Cent Stock standing in the names of the official Trustees of Charitable Funds; and, if such be the intention, when it is proposed to make and publish the Regulations.

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Such regulations have been made by the Treasury and communicated to the Charity Commissioners, and they will be published in to-day's *Gazette*, or in Friday's at the latest.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—CONVICTION OF G. A. ARNOLD, AT WOLVERHAMPTON.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether a man named George A. Arnold was tried at Wolverhampton, on the 28th of March last, for breaches of the Coal Mines Regulation Act; whether the prosecution was ordered by the Home Office; whether the following charges were proved against the defendant:—that there were not two means of egress from the mine; that no proper Reports of examination of the shaft had been made; that the top of the shaft was unfenced; if so, what was the total amount of penalties to which the defendant rendered himself liable; and, what was the amount of the fine imposed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, the answer to the first three paragraphs was in the affirmative. As to the fourth paragraph, there were in all 12 charges proved against the defendant, who was liable to a maximum fine of £20 for each offence. As these were the first informations under the Coal Mines Regulation Act of last year, the stipendiary magistrate decided to impose small fines of 2*s.* 6*d.* in half the cases, and to dismiss the other half on payment of costs. The total fines paid, therefore, amounted to 15*s.*

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION OF JOHN DOUGLASS AND JOSEPH WOLFENDALE FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in the case of John Douglas and Joseph Wolfardale, who were convicted at Alnwick on December 31, 1886, the men were allowed "one month" in which to pay their fines; and, whether it was the duty of the magistrates at the end of the month to issue a warrant for their arrest and imprisonment in case the fine should not be paid; if so, whether he would state why the men were not imprisoned until 14 months after the date of their conviction?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am advised that the magistrates had power to allow extended time under the 7th section of the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879. I am informed by an experienced Metropolitan magistrate that the same course is continually adopted by magistrates in the interests of defendants.

MR. FENWICK asked, why the warrant for the arrest of the men was not issued until 14 months after the date of their conviction?

MR. MATTHEWS said, he understood that the magistrates were under the impression that the men could not pay the fine; and they, therefore, extended the period of the payment of the fine from time to time.

MR. FENWICK: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Douglas, one of the men now in prison, stated in Court that he was unable to pay, and that he would be less likely to be able to pay at the end of the month, seeing that a trade dispute was pending, and that he offered at that time to go to prison?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; I have no information to that effect.

MR. FENWICK: In consequence of the unsatisfactory answer I have received to this Question, I beg to give Notice that after Questions are disposed of I shall, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, move the adjournment of the House, in order to put the facts of the case on record.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FAILURE OF MESSRS. GREENWAY, SMITH, AND GREENWAY, BANKERS, WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he can, without injury to the interests of justice, supplement the answer which was given by the former Secretary to the Board on the 10th of February, by stating what steps the Board are taking, and propose to take, as to the bankruptcy of Messrs. Greenway, Smith, and Greenway, bankers, of Warwick and Leamington?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): In answer to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that it is not in the interests of justice that I should make any further observations with regard to the case at present, than that the whole of the proceedings in the bankruptcy alluded to are having the most careful consideration of the Board of Trade.

LOTTERIES ACTS — DRAWING OF TICKETS ON "PRIMROSE DAY."

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to the sale by the Barnoldswick Conservative Club of lottery tickets for prizes, which are to be drawn for on Primrose Day, April 19; whether any steps will be taken to prevent the lottery from being held; and, whether he can state how many lotteries promoted by Political Clubs or Societies, or for political purposes, have been actually prevented by the Director of Public Prosecutions during the present Session?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, his attention had not been drawn to the lottery referred to otherwise than by the Question. If anything illegal were about to take place, it would be the duty of the Local Authorities to interfere. The Director of Public Prosecutions had since February 12 interfered in 12 cases. In two of these he had prosecuted successfully; in one the Local Authorities had prosecuted; in four cases the lotteries had been withdrawn, and the result in the remaining cases was not yet ascertained.

MR. COBB asked, whether the Public Prosecutor would not interfere in this case? He had sent a ticket for the lottery to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. MATTHEWS: The ticket has not reached me. When it does I will return it. The Director of Public Prosecutions has recently represented to me that it was extremely inconvenient for him to be called upon to take action in all these cases, and that it would be better, outside the Metropolis, to call the attention of the Local Authorities to them. I think there is weight in that representation; and I propose, unless the cases should be within the Metropolitan area, to leave the matter for the future to the Local Authorities.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—NEW CODE, ARTICLE 21—GRANTS FOR COOKERY.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, If he would explain why the Scottish Education Department has restricted the conditions under which grants for cookery will be paid in Scotland under Article 21 of the New Code; whether this restriction will decrease the amount of the grant for cookery paid to Scotland, while it will remain unchanged in England, where no restriction is proposed; and, whether the Department has received any representations from school boards or teachers of cookery in Scotland as to the probable effect of Article 21 of the New Scottish Code in curtailing instruction in cookery in public schools?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The alteration in Article 21, restricting the class in which girls are taught to cook with their own hands to 12 scholars, was introduced into the Code of 1888 upon strong representations made by the cookery schools of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the School Board of Edinburgh, that no greater number could be efficiently trained in the practical class by one teacher. The Department expects that the result of the alterations in the Article will be to increase the total amount of grant earned throughout Scotland, as well as to improve the efficiency of the training; particularly as another alteration has been made, by which a 2*s.* grant will be given for a cooking course limited to 24 instead of

40 hours. No representations have reached the Department as to the supposed probability of Article 21 of the Code of 1888 tending to curtail instruction in cookery in public schools, and it is not thought that this will be the result.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.), arising out of the Question, asked whether in those cases where classes had been formed under the Regulations and Rules of the Codes for last year, where the year of the school had not yet expired, the grant to be given would be given in accordance with the Regulations of the Code of last year, or in accordance with those in the Code for the present year?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am unable to answer the Question of the hon. Member.

Dr. CAMERON: In connection with that Question, would the First Lord of the Treasury say, whether an opportunity will be given for discussing the Code?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I answered a Question on this matter before the holidays, and then said that the Government would afford an opportunity under the Rules of the House before the date which was mentioned, and the hon. Gentleman is aware that a Motion can be made at any time after 12 o'clock.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—RIOT AT CLASHMORE—A CASE OF HUGH MATHESON, COTTAR.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, with reference to the case of Hugh Matheson, at present undergoing 12 months' imprisonment for rioting at Clashmore, Sutherlandshire, Whether the Secretary for Scotland has yet investigated the statements contained in the five statutory declarations placed in his hands on the 15th ultimo, and showing that Matheson was not in the riot, but had been convicted in error; whether he has since received other statutory declarations to the same effect; whether the prisoners convicted at the same time as Matheson have made declarations as to his innocence; whether he has any objection to lay copies of the declarations in question upon the Table of the House; and, whether the persons who signed the declarations have been examined on behalf of the Secretary for Scotland; and, if so, on what date?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The statements referred to have been considered, and inquiries are being made into the matter. Declarations have also been made by the prisoners who were convicted along with Matheson, and other declarations have been lately received. I must decline to lay any Papers on the Table of this House, or to state what steps are being taken by the Secretary for Scotland; but I can assure my hon. Friend that most earnest attention is being given to the matter.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE YEOMANRY CAVALRY.

Mr. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will consider the desirability of remitting the Horse Tax in the case of horses ridden during permanent duty by those serving in the Yeomanry Cavalry?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, Sir; the Horse Duty will be repaid for such horses on proper proof being produced.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—SERVICE AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the Police Regulation just issued by Sir Charles Warren with reference to the police in attendance upon this House?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that there was no objection to laying a copy of the Regulation on the Table.

METROPOLIS—HACKNEY CARRIAGES—LICENCES AND TAX UPON CABS AND OMNIBUSES.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the cabs and omnibuses plying for hire in the Metropolitan Police District are subject to a police licence of £2 per year; whether the last annual Return showed that the revenue derived from police licences during the year ended 31st March, 1887, amounted to £33,610 15*s.* 2*d.*; who received the money; what check there is upon the expenditure; whether the original object with which the tax was imposed was to provide for a proper inspection of such vehicles; whether he will state the annual cost of such inspection; whether there was on the 31st March, 1887, standing to the credit of the police in the Bank of England and elsewhere a balance of £198,505 19*s.* 9*d.*; in whose name the money is banked, and what is intended to be done with it; and, whether the proprietors of cabs pay in addition to the above-mentioned police licence, 15*s.* per annum as Carriage Tax, and the proprietors of omnibuses £2 2*s.* per annum?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, the cabs and omnibuses plying for hire in the Metropolitan Police District were subject to a police licence of £2 a-year, and that the revenue derived from this licence amounted last year to £33,610 15*s.* 2*d.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with a view to shortening and simplifying the debate on the second reading of the Local Government Bill, he will give an assurance that, when Clause 35 is reached, adequate time will be given for the discussion of the general application of the Bill to the Metropolis.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that ample opportunity would be given for the discussion of the questions affecting the Metropolis when Clause 35 was reached; and he could not doubt that that would be the best opportunity for dealing with all the Metropolitan questions in connection with the measure.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—JUDICIAL DISCRETION OF MAGISTRATES.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, the Question which he had put upon the Paper seemed to have been slightly altered. The Question now stood—To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a Circular recently addressed by Sir West Ridgeway, on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant, to the magistrates in Ireland, conveying the disapproval of His Excellency of short sentences of imprisonment, and suggesting that a certain class of prisoners should receive longer sentence of imprisonment; and, whether any interference by the head of the Executive in Ireland with the judicial discretion of magistrates has the sanction of the Government? He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland simply whether such a Circular had been recently issued by Sir West Ridgeway?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member now simply asks me whether such a Circular has been issued, and my reply is that such a Circular has been issued.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: I wish to ask the whole Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member, in his Question, does not accurately convey the meaning of the Circular to which he refers. The main objects of the Circular were—(1) To bring the English and Irish practice more into harmony; (2) to save waste of time and money; (3) to induce magistrates to follow the course indicated by various statutes with regard to first offences or trivial offences, whereby terms of imprisonment which are injurious but not deterrent may be avoided. It is hardly necessary to add that the Circular has nothing to do with the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act of last year.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I wish to ask whether, in addition to the motives which the right hon. Gentleman has explained as to the sending out of the Circular, there is not another, and whether that is not the one that at the present time the local gaols are principally occupied by National Leaguers, and that this is a hint to the magistrates not to be sending drunkards and the hardened classes of criminals into the gaols by sentencing them to imprisonment; and, also, whether it is not a fact that in Tralee Gaol at the present time the percentage of the criminal classes is only about 10; and, whether the hardened criminals are not going about the streets and boasting that the respectable people are all in gaol and that there is no room for hem?

[No reply.]

IRISH LANDOWNERS — "PRINTED STATEMENT" OF GRIEVANCES.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the "printed statement" of the grievances of Irish landowners, dealing with their alleged right to compensation for losses owing to legislation, the extent of such losses, the constitution and working of the Land Commission, and other supposed grounds of complaint, which was placed in the hands of the Prime Minister by the deputation headed by the Duke of Abercorn on February 3 last?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I have not seen the statement referred to by the hon. Member; but I am unaware of any precedent for laying such a document on the Table: and if such a demand was granted it would open the door for requests for similar documents handed in by deputations on other subjects. Under these circumstances, I am unable to assent to the production of the statement.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will inform the House prior to, or upon, the second reading of the Local Government Bill, as to the proposals of the Government in reference to local government in Ireland?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith)(Strand, Westminster): In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the Government have already distinctly announced that it is not their intention to proceed with a Local Government Bill for Ireland in the course of the present Session. It must be obvious, I think, to the hon. Baronet that the time available this Session is already fully disposed of. There will, however, be no indisposition to extend to Ireland an improved system of local government, suited to its wants, when it is made clear that the people are prepared to receive and work it in a spirit of loyalty to the Crown and to the Constitution.

Mr. Edward Harrington

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Sir EDWARD WATKIN: I wish to ask whether the Government have finally made up their minds that they will not lay on the Table before the close of the Session their ideas of what should be the Bill to be introduced at the proper time for the local self-government of Ireland, in order that during the Recess it may be considered by the people?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think the hon. Baronet will see that such a course is most unusual. No precedent exists for it, and if it did it would be a most inconvenient precedent. I cannot undertake, under the circumstances, to lay such a Paper on the Table.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, by the answer he has just given to the hon. Baronet, he means to convey the impression that it would only be after 20 years of resolute government?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order order!

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (1882)—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION OF JOHN DOUGLASS AND JOSEPH WOLFENDALE FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER.

Mr. FENWICK, Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., the imprisonment of John Douglass and Joseph Wolfendale.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified,

Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

Mr. FENWICK said, he was sorry to take a course which might appear unreasonable to a portion of the House, and he apologized for any inconvenience that might be caused to Public Business by his action in moving the Adjournment. His justification lay in the fact that he was actuated by a strong sense of duty towards some of his constituents who were implicated in this matter, and were sufferers in connection with it. He wished to state that he did not attach any responsibility to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) in the matter. The men now in prison were suffering in consequence of the action of the magistrates; and the information which the right hon. Gentleman had given him in answer to Questions had been obtained from official sources. On the 23rd of March he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was true that on the 31st of December, 1886, five men and one girl were convicted before the Alnwick Bench for having in their possession some pieces of jettisoned timber. The answer was—"I am informed that five men and a girl were convicted on the 22nd of December, 1886." The fact was, they were convicted on the 31st of December, and not on the 22nd, the date given to the Home Secretary by the Clerk to the Justices. The right hon. Gentleman further said that on the 10th of March, three of the men having paid the fine, the Justices issued commitments against the rest, the girl having paid on the 17th. He wished to know what was the difference between a warrant for commitment and the issue of the warrant for arrest, because he was informed by the Governor of Newcastle Prison that the date of the warrant on which he held the prisoners in question was the 1st of March, and not the 10th, as stated by the Home Secretary. During the Recess he went down to Alnwick and collected information on the spot, so that the facts he would give to the House were facts collected from witnesses on the spot, who were engaged at the time in recovering the timber from the vessel that was stranded on the coast of Northumberland on the 21st of December, 1886. On that date a vessel carrying timber was stranded near the colliery village of Ratcliffe. The people of the district were soon on the spot ready to render any assistance in their power in order to rescue the crew from the stranded vessel. In order to lighten the vessel, with a view to getting her off as soon as possible, the timber which she carried was thrown into the sea, and the fishermen and miners were soon engaged in endeavouring to recover the timber from the sea. The fishermen stacked the timber on the links. The miners, unfortunately, instead of stacking the timber on the links, carried the timber to their homes, where it was afterwards found. There was no attempt on the part of these men to conceal the fact that they had carried the timber to their homes; indeed, concealment was impossible, because it was found there by the policeman who searched their premises; but that they had stolen the timber they absolutely denied. He was prepared to admit that the men did wrong in taking the timber from the links to their homes; but that they deliberately and wilfully, and with criminal intent, stole the timber he absolutely denied. The magistrates themselves bore testimony to the fact that the men in Court denied that they had stolen the timber. The information which the magistrates sent to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary distinctly stated that there was no evidence whatever that the men had stolen the timber; and that statement, taken side by side with the denial of the men, showed that there was at least *primâ facie* evidence that the men were not guilty of the charge of which they were convicted before the magistrates on the 31st of December, 1886. This, however, was not the strong point in his case. When a conviction was returned against these men they were sentenced to a month's imprisonment, with the alternative of fine, they being at the same time offered a month within which to pay the fine. The magistrates in their information corroborated his (Mr. Fenwick's) statement that at the end of a month Douglass and Wolfendale being still unable to pay their fines went to the sergeant of police, told him of their inability to pay, and surrendered themselves to go to prison. At that time an industrial dispute was existing between the miners of Northumberland and their employers, which culminated in a strike lasting for 17 weeks. During the period of that strike these men went on two occasions to the sergeant of police and surrendered themselves to suffer the month's imprisonment inflicted by the magistrates. On both occasions the sergeant refused to take them to prison. It was quite true he was not in possession of the commitment warrant, but surely it was his duty to inform the magistrates that these men were unable or unwilling to pay and had surrendered themselves. Seventeen weeks were allowed to elapse, and the men after being some little time in employment were again pressed for the amount of the fine, although they had over and over again offered themselves to go to prison. Wolfendale's wife offered the police sergeant 20*s.* towards the fine. That was refused, and on a subsequent occasion, when she had 35*s.*, she said to the sergeant she supposed it was no use offering him that or anything short of the full amount of the fine of £2. The right hon. Gentleman said the police sergeant had no power to receive any instalments from either Wolfendale or his wife, but surely the whole object of the magistrates in giving the men time was to enable them to pay by instalments. There was at least strong presumptive evidence in this case that the whole of the proceedings had been characterized by vindictiveness. He had the permission of the manager of the colliery where Douglass was employed to make this statement, that when he asked the sergeant of police why he did not arrest the men when they were unable to pay and offered to go to prison, the reply of the sergeant was that he would take the men at his own time, and not at the time when they thought fit to go to prison. This statement proved conclusively that there was vindictiveness in this case, if not on the part of the magistrates, at least on the part of the sergeant of police. Under what statute did the magistrates derive their authority to delay the arrest of men who had been convicted 14 months previous? The moment the men obtained employment they were bullied by the policeman for the amount of the fine, and the fine not being forthcoming at the end of 14 months, they were shackled together like common felons, and removed in the early morning, before they had time to break their fast, to Newcastle Gaol, there to undergo their month's imprisonment. He thought the statement he had made was altogether at variance with the information given to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, and before sitting down he would appeal to him whether, considering all the circumstances of the case and in consequence of the great hardship that had been entailed upon the wives and families of these men, he would not favourably consider a mitigation of the sentences which they had been ordered to undergo? If the right hon. Gentleman were to take this course it would do much to allay the suffering and the bitterness of feeling that had been engendered in the district. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Fenwick.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E) said, he presumed the principal object of the hon. Member was accomplished by having the statement made and the facts put on record. The information on which he based his answer to the Question was derived not from the magistrates, but from the magistrates' clerk, and it did not agree on all points with the statement the hon. Member had made, although the differences were not material. The men were not prosecuted for stealing timber, but for having it in their possession. The prosecution was under a clause of the Consolidation Act of 1861 relating to the possession of articles belonging to a ship or vessel in distress, wrecked, or stranded. In this case notices had been published all along the coast, so that none could be in ignorance of the law. The prosecution was instituted by the Receiver of Wrecks, on behalf of the Board of Trade, and he pressed for a conviction specially on the ground that the notice had been published. There could be no doubt—the hon. Member himself admitted it—that the articles were found on the premises of the defendants.

MR. FENWICK: The magistrates said there was no evidence the articles had been stolen.

MR. MATTHEWS: The sworn evidence before the magistrates was that the timber found upon the premises of the prisoners was not taken out of the sea, but was taken from piles that had been stacked on the links by the fishermen. From these piles 100 pieces were missed, and some of the timber found in the possession of the prisoners was identified by the marks upon it as having been removed from those stacks. The evidence certainly warranted the conclusion of the magistrates, and the punishment was not excessive. The penalty imposed was £2, whereas it might have been £20. He could not join issue with the hon. Member as to the action of the magistrates and police. Their conduct, so far from being harsh, was one of unusual leniency. The 7th section of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, gave the magistrates jurisdiction to extend the time for paying the fine, and one of the oldest and most experienced of the Metropolitan magistrates had informed him that it was usual to exercise this discretion for the convenience of defendants.

MR. FENWICK: Against the will of a defendant?

MR. MATTHEWS said, the accused men took the wrong course in speaking to the police sergeant, who had no power either to accept or remit the fine or to commit the men to prison, but he considered the sergeant as being to blame for not having brought the matter under the notice of the magistrates. The information he had was that no statement was ever made by the men to the magistrates that they would prefer to go to prison because they could not pay the fine.

MR. FENWICK said, that Douglass stated in Court that he was unable to pay.

MR. MATTHEWS said, the magistrates gave them longer time to pay out of pure kindness and consideration, knowing that they were then out on strike. The magistrates felt that they could not remit the fine, because that would not be fair to other defendants who were brought up at the same time and fined for a similar offence. He quite agreed that it was a considerable hardship upon the men to be taken off to prison just as they were getting into work again, but he was bound to say that, looking carefully into the case, it did not strike him that there was any intentional hardship. The error was in the men making their communication to the police sergeant instead of going direct to the magistrates. Although he did blame the police sergeant for not having brought the matter to the notice of the magistrates, he was bound to say, in justice to the magistrates, that he could not see that any blame whatever attached to them. He fully recognized the right of the hon. Member to put on record the grievance in this case, but he must feel that evidence brought before the House was hardly evidence on which he (Mr. Matthews) could act. But, if the hon. Member would furnish him with the affidavits in his possession, he would consider whether it was possible for him to remit any part of the sentence the men had to undergo.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) said, he was of opinion that his hon. Friend had made out a case for the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, who, he thought, might well adopt the suggestion that had been made. He thought the men in this instance had been hardly treated. The real grievance was that 14 months were allowed to elapse before the men were taken off to prison. He considered that the right hon. Gentleman would be fully justified in remitting the remainder of the sentence. He failed to see, however, that any useful purpose would be secured by pressing the Motion to a Division.

MR. FENWICK asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would take into consideration all the peculiar circumstances of the case with a view to remitting the remainder of the men's terms of imprisonment?

MR. MATTHEWS said, he must repeat what he had said on former occasions, that he could not give any promise on matters of this kind across the floor of the House; but if the hon. Gentleman laid any materials before him bearing on the case he would consider them fully and with due consideration.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that he did not think the right hon. Gentleman could be expected to say more at present than he had done. He would advise his hon. Friend to lay before the right hon. Gentleman any materials which he might have, and after the assurance which had been given he could not doubt that the right hon. Gentleman would take them into his careful consideration. For his (Mr. John Morley's) own part, he thought that his hon. Friend was justified in calling the attention of the House to the very severe and undoubted hardship of this case.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. CONYBEARE—A PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I desire, Mr. Speaker, to make a personal explanation in reference to a statement which was made in my absence, during the debate on the Address, by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I may say that I was in South Africa at the moment. The right hon. Gentleman commented upon some remarks which I am alleged to have made at Castlereagh, and he used words in reference to them which exactly exemplified my own case, for he said that the reference which had been made to Lord Carnarvon was most unfortunate, seeing that at the time it was made the noble Lord was at the other end of the world. The Chief Secretary said that the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall had stated at Castlereagh—"You are justified as Christians not to pay rent, whether it be a fair rent or not." I wish to take the earliest opportunity of repudiating the charge, and of denying that I ever said anything of the kind. I am glad to see the Chief Secretary in his place, and I am anxious to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman and the House that, whatever I may have said in the course of the several speeches I delivered in Ireland, I did not make use of any statement which might be converted into such a sentiment. What I always insisted upon was this—that men must not be blamed if they refuse to pay rent which cannot be made out of the land; and I think the right hon. Gentleman will see that that is a totally different sentiment to that which I am charged with having uttered. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the speech as one which I delivered at Westport; but it was one which was made by me at Castlereagh. His statements in reference to Westport are altogether inaccurate. He said that I had always advocated the Plan of Campaign, and that I had compared myself to Burghley and Hampden, who did not hesitate to cut off the King's head. Now, everybody knows that Burghley had nothing to do with the cutting off of the King's head, and that Hampden lost his life some years before King Charles lost his head. The right hon. Gentleman must, therefore, see that there must have been a mistake in the report. I have only troubled the House with these statements in order to draw attention to the exceeding laxity with which reports of speeches by Government officials in Ireland are made. It is quite apparent that a danger may exist of instituting prosecutions and of sending men to prison for having made statements which they did not in reality make.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) was understood to say that the passages which had been quoted by the hon. Member were founded on reports supplied by shorthand writers. If, however, the hon. Member repudiated the statements attributed to him, of course he (Mr. Balfour) accepted that repudiation.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, that upon a future day he would call attention to the subject.

MOTIONS.

FISHERY DEPARTMENT (BOARD OF TRADE).—RESOLUTION.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I rise for the purpose of calling attention to the present constitution of the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade, and the necessity for persons having practical knowledge of the fisheries of the country being associated with the same; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade as now constituted is not in accordance with the scheme by which the control of the fisheries was transferred to the Board of Trade, and, in order to carry out that scheme and to secure the proper management and development of the fisheries of England and Wales, they should be placed under an authority comprising, in addition to the officials of the Board of Trade, persons with practical knowledge of the Sea and Inland Fisheries."

It may be asked why I should trouble the House with a matter which was fully gone into two years ago. My answer is, that my proposal which was made in March, 1886, has not been carried out as regards the question of practical men being associated with the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade, and as was agreed upon by my right hon. Friend the then President of the Board of Trade. There is no necessity for going into the matter at any great length, nor is it necessary to refer to the importance of our fisheries; but it si desirable that I should refer to certain acts in connection with the fishing industry, as there are many hon. Members present in this Parliament who were not Members of the last Parliament, and whose constituents are, no doubt, interested in the question. I think the House will agree with me as to the importance of our fisheries, whether as regards the food supply of the country, and the hard-working and brave men who are engaged in the fishing industry around our coast, or whether we regard it as a nursery for the Navy, or the safety of the lives of our fishermen. I trust that all will admit that on these grounds steps should be taken to encourage the great fishing industry, and not let foreigners supply our markets with fish instead of our own fishermen. In order to carry out that object, it is most important that we should have an efficient and practical Fishery Department in England, not inferior in any way to those of foreign mercantile nations, but, as I should wish, superior. If the fishing industry is not considered of sufficient importance and magnitude to allow of a thoroughly organized and efficient Department, well and good; but I should like to hear the arguments of any hon. Member who will say so. The total value of fish landed in the United Kingdom last year was no less than £7,700,000, exclusive of sprats, whitebait, trout, eels, and other fresh water fish. There is also a doubt whether the statistics supplied from time to time are correct, and in my opinion the figures I have quoted are much below the mark. Four years ago Mr. Spencer Walpole quoted the annual value at £10,000,000. No less than 250,000 men are employed in the fisheries of the United Kingdom, and there are at the present time 45,254 boats engaged in the sea fisheries. When I referred to the matter in March, 1886, I pointed out the necessity of practical men being associated with the Fishery Board as a Fishery Department, and I made a special point of that. My right hon. Friend alluded in his speech to the importance of that point. I also referred to the unfortunate state of affairs which then existed, and to the fact that the Government Departments which had to do with the fisheries of the United Kingdom were scattered, and had not the advantage of one Central Department. I also referred to the importance of employing a certain number of cruisers under the control of the Fishery Department to protect the fisheries in the same way as cruisers are now employed by the Scotch Fishery Board. What has been done since my Resolution was discussed in this House? There has been a transfer of the Fishery Department from the Home Office to the Board of Trade. An Assistant Secretary, Mr. Swanston, has been appointed, and three Inspectors, Mr. Barrington, Mr. Malan, and Mr. Fryer. The fishery interest, however, is waiting for the appointment of practical men in the Department, and my impression is that it will have to wait unless the Government take up the matter and assist the fishing interest. As regards the Vote for the Department, it has been increased but very little. I mentioned, on the former occasion, that the American Government voted annually no less a sum than £50,000, as compared with the paltry £1,500 or £1,600 we voted in England. One of the actions taken by the new Fishery Department was taken in February last, when the Department invited a conference of Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Board of Conservators of the Inland Fisheries, and they were addressed by the President of the Board of Trade. No results, however, of any consequence were forthcoming. I wish to say that I am still in favour of a Statutory Board as compared with a Fishery Department. My right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Mundella) stated in March, 1886, that he did not see his way to recommend the appointment of a Statutory Board, and he said that there were objections to it. The House, however, will recollect that the Royal Commission on Trawling reported in favour of a Statutory Board with certain powers. It is not necessary to read the recommendations of that Commission, as they are well known. One of the objections related, I imagine, to a question of finance. There is a very strong feeling indeed around the coast of England that the great herring fisheries should have the same privileges and advantages which are already possessed by Scotland—namely, a brand for the herring fishery and one on the West of England for pilchards. The revenue derivable from such brand would be no less than from £6,000 to £8,000 a-year, and that sum would be available for a Statutory Board to carry out their most useful work.

My own opinion is that it ought to be assisted in a substantial way by the Treasury. I may be asked what can be done to give satisfaction to the fishery interest in this matter? There is a strong feeling in the trade that reform is needed in the Fishery Department, and an important conference has been held in London this year of representatives from all parts of the country, in which this feeling was strongly expressed. They did not want to have a repetition of the blunders of the past, but that the real requirements of the trade should be ascertained and dealt with in a practical manner. If the Department were made efficient, or if there were a Statutory Board, I believe that a great deal of expense might be saved with reference to the inquiries which are now held, from time to time, in different parts of the country. Practical men connected with the trade would be able to render the greatest assistance to any Government with reference to any international question which might arise. I may mention a matter which arose last autumn. A proposal was made in a friendly way by the Belgian Government to put a stop to trawling at night within certain limits in the North Sea, and to assign stated times for drift-net fishing. Practical men would have at once informed the Belgian Government that no such course could be adopted; but for a considerable time the question was left undecided, and the Belgian Government were left in doubt as to what our views were. Practical men would have said at once that the proposal could not be entertained. Then there are other questions upon which practical men could give great assistance to the Government, such as the question of inshore trawling. Trawling within the three-mile limit, the capture of immature fish, the conveyance of fish from the captor to the consumer, and the question of close time at the fisheries, can only be settled by men of practical experience. The question of practical men being associated with the Government is not a new point; because the Board of Trade, six years ago, adopted the principle in consequence of the disastrous blunders made in reference to international lights on fishing vessels, when they had to send to Grimsby and Yarmouth for practical men to get them out of the difficulties into which they had fallen from ignorance; and in "another place," in the course of the present Session, the Board of Trade have introduced the Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) Bill. That Bill has been read a second time, and one of the proposals it contains is that a Committee should be constituted consisting of three shipowners, three shipbuilders, three persons practically acquainted with the navigation of vessels—three persons who are, or have been, able-bodied seamen, and three persons selected from Lloyd's Register. Here we have a proposal put forward by the Board of Trade for appointing practical men in matters connected with navigation. I am afraid the House will think that I am going to place the cart before the horse, but hon. Members will see my reason directly. I hold very strongly that there ought to be Local Councils at all our principal fishing ports or fishing districts around the coast of England; that such self-elected Councils might have certain defined powers, and be subject to the control either of Parliament or the Board of Trade. Among other matters, these Local Councils should have power to investigate such vexed questions as those of inshore trawling, and trawling within the three-mile limit, and they should, further, administer the Crab and Lobster Act, as well as ascertain the state of the mussel beds, and even the investigation of outrages, which, unfortunately, are sometimes committed. The Board of Trade, if that were done, would be saved the expense of sending down Inspectors to hold inquiries, and the Councils would be able to furnish fuller and more accurate statistics than those which are now supplied by the Board of Trade. Unfortunately, the statistics now supplied are not as accurate as they ought to be, and the Local Councils I propose would be able to assist in that matter with more advantage. I would further recommend that the Board of Trade official at the fishing district should be a representative of the Local Councils, and that the Councils should hold office three years. I would further suggest that the Chairman or Deputy Chairman should be periodically summoned to the Central Board in London, to form, in conjunction with a naval officer, a Consultative Committee, so that the Board of Trade might obtain the services of practical men. The Board would be summoned from time to time to a monthly or quarterly meeting, or whenever any matter of urgency or importance occurred, and their expenses would be paid. The House will now see why I have put the cart before the horse. In that way a Consultative Committee would be formed; and I would further suggest that a naval officer should be attached to the Fishery Board, or to the Consultative Committee, and that the present Inspector of Fisheries should receive orders from that Board. I think the Board might have statutory powers to enable it to make bye-laws, and should also possess the other useful powers which the Irish and Scotch Members have, which powers have proved to be of great use. I would further extend such powers, and I should be glad to see more direct communication between the new Department and the Admiralty and Foreign Office. At present there is much delay in carrying out any proposal, and the loss of time involved is a cause of serious inconvenience when Parliament is not sitting. I have only dealt with the sea fisheries; but in regard to the inland fisheries, considering the importance, for instance, of the salmon fisheries of this country, there are certainly matters connected with them which ought not to be trifled with, but ought to have some representation on the new Fishery Board. For instance, it might be advisable to divide England into districts, so that the salmon fisheries should be under the control of inland boards, which might be associated with the new Department. At present, the Salmon Fishery Board complain that their interests have not been studied as they ought to be at the hands of the Board of Trade. It may be thought that I am crying down the officers connected with the Board of Trade. All I have to say is that that is the last thing that I wish to do. I believe that Mr. Swanston is a very able man; that he has done the utmost in his power, and that he has given great satisfaction. The same may be said of his colleagues, Mr. Barrington, Mr. Malan, and Mr. Fryer; but still they are not the practical men whom the fishery interests desire. I gather from the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the Treasury was the main obstacle in 1886 in making a Statutory Fishery Board. If that was the case, it was an obstacle which ought to be removed at once. I believe that my right hon. Friend opposite will be with me on this question. Last autumn he went down to Lowestoft. I will not refer to the remarks he made in reference to Home Rule; but in regard to the fisheries he said—

> "He desired to obtain information as to the formation of a Fishery Board, that should be in constant touch with the fisheries and fishermen around the coast. It seemed to the right hon. Gentleman that many of the mistakes which had been made in the past were due to the fact that the authorities in London, however well-intentioned, had not been in touch with the localities."

I entirely agree with what my right hon. Friend said, and I believe that the fishing interest agrees with it too. I believe there are very strong grounds for reform in the direction I have indicated, and I claim that the fishing industry must not be allowed to suffer for want of an honest attempt to bring this proposal about. We should see whether in the case of this fishing interest, or of agriculture, we ought longer to put up sham Departments. What we want is a practical element, and I should like to see the present Government have the credit of carrying out what the fishermen have so long asked for, and what my right hon. Friend, in two or three passages of his speech in answer to my Motion in 1886, intimated that he was so anxious of supporting—namely, the policy of associating practical men with a Fishery Department. Taking into consideration the great things which are about to be done in connection with local government in England, I think it is desirable that the Local Councils I have suggested should forthwith be established by the State, and that a Fishery Board, or a Fishery Department, should be formed in the way I have proposed. With these remarks, I wish to move the Resolution which stands in my name.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): In rising to second the Motion which has been moved by the hon. Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck), I cannot say that I have the same anxiety that the proposal he has made should be carried out by the present Government, or that they should have the credit of the reform now asked for. I naturally do not feel the same interest in that direction as that which is felt by the hon. Member; but, at the same time, I am aware, from experience, what a pressing question this is, and I think it is emphatically not a Party question. I am afraid that it is one which has not excited the opposition of either of the two great political Parties; and, therefore, it might have failed to arouse a sufficient amount of interest in either of them to enable them to deal with it. I wish, from my own personal experience, to offer a few remarks in enforcing the necessity for something being done. The hon. Member for East Norfolk has studied the question more than I have, and he is much more able to advise the House as to the best practical mode of dealing with the question. At the present moment the fishing population is scattered up and down our coast, and is in a state of great disaster. In my own part of England the suffering and misery which they have undergone has been a byeword among the community. The fishermen and their families are, indeed, unable to get a living; and it is a matter of common remark that they are being crushed out of existence by a slow process of starvation. The fishermen themselves are unanimous on, at all events, some of the remedies they wish to be applied to their trade, such as trawling, the size of the meshes of the net, railway rates, close time, and so forth. The fishermen are quite unanimous on some of these questions; upon others they differ, having their own opinions; but, at the present moment, they are perfectly convinced that no one in authority practically understands their wants, and they are also, I am sorry to say, fully convinced that no one in authority cares about them. The fishermen are convinced of this, and I do not think their conviction is unjustifiable. People sometimes meet the question by saying that the fishing trade is necessarily depressed, as all other trades are, and that there is no practical remedy for it. At any rate, nothing has, so far, been done; and this House has no knowledge as to what it is possible to do and what is not possible. Only two or three years ago, a Commission was appointed to investigate the trawling question, a most important question indeed, and that Commission made a most moderate Report; but, nevertheless, I believe that not one of its recommendations has been carried into effect. The fishermen think that they have suffered from want of regulation; and they want to see some new life infused into the Fishery Board, by placing practical men upon it, who shall have full power to deal with fishery questions affecting their interest. The right hon. Gentleman who was President of the Board of Trade in 1886 said he trusted that the Department would be so arranged in future that there would be no difficulty in insuring prompt attention for every question. I do not think that that is enough. There should not only be a Department established for regulating the fisheries, but it should be one in which the fishermen themselves should have confidence. At this moment the fishermen on many parts of the coast do not know of the existence of such a Department at all, and they never will until they are called to take some active part in getting men whom they know and trust appointed in the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade. I do not suppose that the Government will meet this Resolution in a hostile spirit. On the contrary, I have every confidence that the Government will meet it in a satisfactory way, and will propose something that may adequately meet the wishes of the hon. Member for East Norfolk. But we all know that when a Bill is introduced into Parliament its fate is very doubtful. Many of the Bills which are introduced cannot possibly be carried into effect. Therefore, I ask the House to consider what this trade is that is suffering so much at the present moment, and see whether it is not an industry which, more than any other, needs the active sympathy and support of the House. Although it cannot be called skilled labour, it is, at all events, self-educated labour; and with regard to the objection of expense in connection with the public funds, it must be recollected that so far the fishing interest has made very few demands on the public purse. They make no demands for education and grants in aid; they turn out every year a large body of men, thoroughly efficient in their own trade, and it must not be forgotten that being trained to a seafaring life they cannot migrate with the same ease as other classes to our big towns, where, indeed, they would be greatly handicapped. Their occupation has always been on the sea; their trade is a precarious one; and the plant necessary to enable them to carry on their trade is extremely expensive, and is liable to frequent accidents. They are themselves a hardy race of men, and, moreover, they are law-abiding, and give little trouble. All they desire is to prosecute their trade so as to enable them to earn a fair livelihood. Therefore, I wish the House to take into consideration the misery these men are now suffering, and to believe that it is not the less because it does not find any great expression. I feel bound to give, not only sympathy, but a warm support to the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for East Norfolk. The demand of my hon. Friend on the part of the fishermen has been put forward in a manner which cannot be offensive to any quarter of the House, or any class of the community, and I should be sorry to see another Session pass without the question being thoroughly attended to. I hope that another Session will not be allowed to pass without effective assistance being rendered by the Legislature to a class which most needs its care. Upon these grounds, I beg to second the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade as now constituted is not in accordance with the scheme by which the control of the fisheries was transferred to the Board of Trade, and in order to carry out that scheme and to secure the proper management and development of the fisheries of England and Wales, they should be placed under an authority comprising, in addition to the officials of the Board of Trade, persons with practical knowledge of the Sea and Inland Fisheries."—(*Sir Edward Birkbeck.*)

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, he thought it was high time that a Board of practical men should be organized in order to protect and look after the fishing industry. This industry was overweighted in two ways; the North Sea fishermen were heavily handicapped by the excessive differential rates charged by the Railway Companies, and those in the estuary of the Thames by the fact that their nets were destroyed and their fishing grounds ruined by the abominable practice of barges loaded with rubbish discharging it between Southend and Leigh. Unless some remedy were devised like that indicated by the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Birkbeck), the British fishermen would disappear, and with them would also go the Royal Naval Reserve, so that ultimately we should have to depend upon the foreigner for the supply of fish as well as for the supply of bread.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, there was a strong feeling among the fishermen upon the North-East Coast that their interests were neglected by Government. The fishing interest got crushed out whenever there was pressure of business at the Board of Trade, and he doubted whether anything had been gained by the Fishery Board being made a Department of the Board of Trade. In the many questions which of late years had interested the fishing industry they had always found a great want of knowledge on the part of the Board of Trade. He believed that if practical men connected with the trade had the opportunity of fairly bringing their opinions forward, it would be exceedingly useful to the President of the Board of Trade on many occasions. He went further than his hon. Friend the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck), and contended that there should be a distinct Department for Trade, Agriculture, and Fishing, and be free from the action of the Privy Council, of which the Board of Trade was only a Committee. There should be Councils at the fishing ports, with Chairmen who could correspond with the Head Department in London, and the President of the Board of Trade would be able to come to more rapid decisions upon the important questions submitted to him. He did not think that they would do much as long as the fishing industry was looked after by what was merely a Sub-Department tacked on to the Board of Trade. The Admiralty and the Foreign Office sometimes stepped in after the Board of Trade was ready and willing to grant what was asked by the fishermen. The consequence was a great loss of valuable time, although both the Admiralty and the Foreign Office were willing to do their best. Although he wished to go further than what was proposed by the hon. Baronet, at the same time he considered that these proposals would be an instalment that would prove of much good to the fishing industry. He begged to support the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Mr. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay) said, he was not able to speak with the knowledge and authority of his hon. Friend the Mover of the Resolution. But as representing a constituency in which there was a large number of fishermen he desired to support the Resolution. Difficulties were constantly cropping up which he believed might easily be settled by some such Local Council as that proposed. There were constantly complaints of the interference of one class of fishermen with another, which interference was very awkward sometimes for the Member representing the constituency in which it occurred. Various questions, and very interesting questions, often arose with regard to the destruction of immature fish, which would be dealt with by such a Department as his hon. Friend suggested. A Department such as this, too, would deal with statistics, and he thought that if they had had fishery statistics at their demand, the vexed question of railway rates might have been dealt with long before this. It was well known that the fishing trade in all parts of the country suffered very much from the heavy railway rates that were now charged. He reminded the House that it was not only the fishermen themselves who were interested in this question, but that there were a large number of trades connected with fishing—such as rope making, net making, and boat building interested in it. On the prosperity of the fishing interest also depended the prosperity of a very large number of artizans who were living along our coast. He most cordially supported the Resolution.

Sir SAVILE CROSSLEY (Suffolk, Lowestoft) said, he desired, as a Representative of one of the most important fishing constituencies in the country, to support the Motion. The fishing interest was deeply interested in the hon. Baronet's suggestion being carried out, and he trusted the Government would see their way to adopt the Motion, and so prevent the necessity of persons being driven from the Foreign Office to the Board of Trade, and from the Board of Trade to the Admiralty, when any fishery question cropped up.

Mr. BOLITHO (Cornwall, St. Ives) said, that inasmuch as he came from a part of England where fishing was carried on to a great extent, he thought he would not be true to his colours if he did not say how necessary it was that something should be done to promote the interests of the fishing industry. It was well known—for it had often been stated—that the fishermen of England and Scotland were suffering most acutely at the present moment. Of course, legislation would not altogether work a cure; but there was no doubt that it could do much to alleviate the condition of our fishermen. He was fully persuaded that if the suggestion which had been made by his hon. Friend the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck)—who had shown himself in the past such a true friend of everything connected with the fishing industry—were carried out, good would be reaped by the people of this country. He could not think, in view of the spirit which actuated the Government in relation to measures affecting all classes of the people, they would turn a deaf ear to the suggestions which had been made, but would not only be disposed to adopt the proposition now made, but to give it practical effect.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire) said, that two years ago, as a Member of the Royal Commission on Trawling, he went closely into all the questions connected with the fishing industry, and he then came to the conclusion that the settlement of these questions would best be promoted by the establishment of a Fishery Board, which would have power to make recommendations, and to secure to each particular class of fishermen the quiet exercise of his own sort of fishing. That opinion he then formed he still held, and he was confident that it would be a great advantage to the fishermen of England to have the same advantages as the Scottish and the Irish fishermen possessed by the establishment of a Fishery Board. The three Irish Fishery Inspectors had the very largest powers of regulating all the fisheries in the territorial waters, and regulating the manner in which the fishermen should carry on their vocation on the Irish coasts. The idea of the Commission certainly was that the time would come when the fisheries of England and Scotland would be united under one Board, which should have power to make bye-laws and regulations with regard to the whole of the fisheries of the United Kingdom; and, from the tone of the discussion, he felt certain that such a united Board would be most beneficial to the fishing industry. The variety of the fisheries was so great that it was perfectly impossible to deal with them in little bits and small portions of the country; they must have a large-minded central body that was able to take cognizance of all the various aspects of the case, and to make general regulations for the fisheries of the whole Kingdom. He was afraid that this could not be done by such local bodies — as had been proved in America—as had been suggested by hon. Members in the course of the discussion. Year after year Committees and Commissions were appointed to inquire, and these were very expensive. He did not think it would be found in the end that the establishment of a Fishery Board would be an expensive thing; on the contrary, he believed they would save money by having such a Board, which would be of infinite service in instituting scientific inquiries into the movements, the food, and the spawning of fish and other questions. It was extraordinary the amount which the Americans expended on the promotion of their fisheries. During the last 10 years the United States Government had voted more than 2,000,000 dollars for the purposes of the United States Fishery Commission. He should, therefore, without pledging himself to the details sketched out by the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck), support the Resolution in its broadest sense—simply that a Fishery Board should be established for England.

Mr. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich) said, he had no desire to detain the House for any length of time; but, as the Representative of a long line of coast on which there were a large number of people whose interests were at stake in this matter, he desired to support the present Motion. He could corroborote what was said by the hon. Member for Northumberland (Sir Edward Grey) as to the precarious nature of this industry, and the grievances which it suffered in respect of railway rates and depredations by foreign fishermen. They were all glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in his present place; and they trusted he would be able to take a step in the direction proposed. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that there was no body of men more deserving of having their interests safeguarded than the fishermen of this country.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, that all men connected with the sea fisheries of England were indebted to the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck) for the constant interest he had shown in this question. The hon. Baronet had urged that it was time the recommendations of the last Royal Commission should be carried into effect. There was a very strong argument indeed in the Report of that Commission in favour of a step in advance being taken on the part of the House. It was surely not to our credit at all that there was any occasion for the statement in the Report in question. The Commissioners stated that they could not pass from the subject without recording their regret at the absence of all official fishing statistics, with the exception of those relating to the herring fisheries and the ling fisheries in Scotland. The collection of such statistics was recommended by the Royal Commission of 1866, and, again, by the Royal Commission of 1878. Eighteen years had elapsed since the recommendation was made, and we were still absolutely without official statistics by which statements as to the decrease of fishing might be tested. He thought that was the most unfortunate admission, when, as they had been most clearly reminded to-night, the fishing industry round our coast was in a state of most serious depression. No attention whatever was paid until two years ago to the most urgent recommendations of the Royal Commission. Now some improvement had been made, which he, for one, most gladly acknowledged; but if hon. Members would only look into the statistics now presented they would see that England was still at a great disadvantage in this matter as compared even with the fisheries of Ireland or Scotland. Surely, on the very face of things, that ought not to be the case; and if the circumstances were examined, he thought it would be seen that it was a wholly indefensible position, because the fisheries of England were of far greater value than the fisheries either of Ireland or of Scotland. Yet there were Statutory

Boards, with full powers, both in Ireland and in Scotland; and we were going on with a Department with extremely limited powers—almost without powers at all. What were the actual facts? The value of the sea fish brought into the English ports last year was returned at £3,900,000. The value of the fish brought into the Scotch ports was £1,400,000, and of that brought into the Irish ports only £600,000; and yet the fishermen of England had to go on feeling that the Government were content to allow them to continue in a most inferior position as compared with that of their brethren in Ireland and Scotland, the value of the fish brought into English ports being twice as large as that brought into Scotch and Irish ports combined. The number of men regularly employed in the fisheries of England was 33,400, as against 30,000 in Scotland and 5,000 in Ireland. That, also, made a strong case for the English fishermen being placed on an equal footing with the fishermen of Ireland and Scotland. Then, again, if anyone would look into the matter, he would see that the statistics now supplied of the English fisheries were exceedingly meagre as compared with the Returns of the Scotch Board. He supposed the difficulty was a financial one. He had reason to believe that a far greater number of facts were sent up from our coasts to the Department than the Department published for the knowledge and advantage of the trade of the country; and he thought they might reasonably ask that all the facts that were collected, and could be collected, should be placed in an available form before the country. This question was assuming greater importance year by year. Hon. Members knew perfectly well that the North Sea was now becoming almost like an enclosed cultivated ground, or one ought rather to say an enclosed ruined fishing ground. There was a condition of things there which was wholly unknown a few years ago; and it was necessary, for the very sake of liberty, if he might so say, in the North Sea, that there should be legislation of one kind or another. Just in the same way as bye-laws were necessary when populations increased on land, so, when they had a bit of sea trawled over by thousands of fishing boats, some with steam and others with sails, belonging to five or six different nations, it became absolutely needful that legislative enactments should be passed which were totally unnecessary many years ago. He would only urge further that some representative elements should be provided in the Fishery Department of this country. On this point, perhaps, the best argument was to be found in the Report of the Royal Commission. The Commissioners said it was impossible that the power of dealing with trawling within the three-mile limit could be exercised with advantage by any Government Department without special knowledge of fishing questions, and an intimate acquaintance with the various localities was necessary if hardship was not to be inflicted upon certain classes of fishermen. He thought that those who had been brought intimately into association with fishermen would entirely agree that whilst they recognized the courtesy and attention of all the officers of the Board of Trade, with whom they were brought into contact, there was a serious blot in the application of the laws at present, and there was a lack of confidence in the Board, because there was so little touch between the Head of the Department and the fishermen along the coast. The Board of Trade was undoubtedly exceedingly competent to deal with the fishing questions of this country; but everyone knew that the life and habits and thought, and, indeed, the very language, of the fishing population was totally distinct from those of the shipping population. Therefore, the Department might be most admirably adapted for dealing with the great mercantile interests of this country, and yet be altogether unsuitable to deal with the fisheries along our coasts. From what they had already heard from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he felt great confidence that they would not appeal in vain in this matter. They had received a most courteous response from the right hon. Gentleman, both this year and last, and he (Mr. Rowntree) would only now join in the appeal made, that there should be no more delay in this matter, because he and others who represented fishing constituencies had at present no answer to the men who were appealing to them most earnestly that the recommendations of the Royal Commission made in their favour should at least receive some attention from the Legislature of this country, and that they should not be left in a position inferior to that of their brethren in Ireland and in Scotland. This was a most urgent question. It was really the denudation of the fish supply along our coasts that we had to face. He could appeal with confidence to the Government, because he felt sure they would receive the most ready assistance of Members of both sides of the House in this matter. If the Government could only see their way to carry out the recommendations of the last Royal Commission, he was persuaded it would be found a most valuable piece of legislation.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) said, that as representing one of the largest fishing ports in the Kingdom, and as having been for 23 years on the Board of Trade, he desired to say a few words on this question. He rose to support the Motion of his hon. Friend (Sir Edward Birkbeck) because he had no doubt the hon. Baronet was wiser in his generation than he (Sir Henry Tyler) was. It would certainly be an advantage to his constituency that the fishing industry should, so long as the Fishery Department was attached to the Board of Trade, be represented at the Board of Trade by experts. He, however, would propose to go a deal further than his hon. Friend. His experience at the Board of Trade had taught him that the Board of Trade was a valuable Department of the State, and very careful in the performance of all the duties it undertook, but that it was not a Department which was fit for the control of the fishing industry of this Kingdom—an industry so important, so large, and so special. The Board of Trade was excellent in exercising advisory, and some deterrent functions, but it was not a Department well qualified to foster an industry which required to be furnished with information, to be nursed, to be protected, and to be developed; and, therefore, his own view was that it would be far better to set up a general Fishing Board for the United Kingdom. They heard very often of justice to Ireland and justice to Scotland. This was a case of justice to England. England had never been properly considered or officially represented or had fair play in respect of fishing. The experiment had recently been made of starting a Department at the Board of Trade, but it had not been successful. Therefore, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would reconsider the whole question in the spirit he had indicated, and would come to the conclusion that so large an industry, which required to be specially fostered, which required special knowledge, and which was different from all other industries, should have a Fishery Board to itself by which its affairs could be properly looked after.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, his hon. Friend had complained that the arrangement or understanding come to when he brought forward his Motion in March, 1886, had not been carried out. He quite agreed with his hon. Friend that a step was taken, but it was only a tentative step. What was the state of things in 1886? The fishing interests were scattered over some six or seven departments. Some were looked after at the Home Office, some at the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, some at the Harbour Department, some at the Admiralty, and some at the Foreign Office. The Government of that day endeavoured to make a department by the creation of a secretary and three Inspectors, and to bring all the interests which were looked after in the several departments he had mentioned under one department. His hon. Friend had appealed to the House to supply themselves with fish, and not to let the foreigner supply it. Whatever might be thought of statistics, he thought they at least proved that the English fisheries were the largest in the world, and that the value of the fish caught within the waters of the United Kingdom was greater than that caught in the waters of any other nation, not excepting America. But there was no commodity more difficult to value than fish. Its value all depended upon when it was valued. Large quantities were wasted, and that, together with the cost of transit, was one of the most important matters in connection with the fish supply. If anything could be done to bring the fishermen into more direct contact with the consumers, it would be an immense gain not only to the fishing industry, but also to the consumers of fish throughout the whole Kingdom. He admired the system of the American Government in spending £40,000 annually on their fisheries and in scientific investigations. His hon. Friend (Sir Edward Birkbeck) had started quite a new question by stating that there was a strong feeling springing up for a brand both for herrings and pilchards. He very much doubted whether the fishermen themselves would consider a brand an advantage. He had observed that since the establishment of the Fishery Department in 1886 very excellent statistics had been furnished, and year by year the Department got much better in touch with the fishing industry. There could not be a better head of the Department than the present Secretary, Mr. Swanston, who spared himself no pains to keep himself in thorough sympathy with the fishermen, and to see that his Inspectors did the same. The friction which formerly existed between the fishermen and the authorities had vanished entirely. Mistakes had occurred in the past, and he agreed with his hon. Friend (Sir Edward Birkbeck) that if anything more could be done to satisfy the reasonable demands of those engaged in the industry, and to make their wants better known, for them to have better information, or supervision, it ought to be done, and he believed the Board of Trade would be ready to consider any proposals. The establishment of Local Councils had been suggested. He could remember that on the occasion of a deputation to the Board of Trade in 1886, he recommended the establishment of local associations as the first step towards Local Councils. Local Councils must be elected by the Associated Chambers of Commerce, kept well in touch with the Board of Trade. He could see no reason why chambers of fishing should not do the same thing. While he did not think it was possible to give the Local Councils powers to make bye-laws and enforce rules and regulations—for if they did there would be local conflict and difficulties—yet they might very well send their chairmen to London periodically, and the chairmen could then be brought into direct contact with the Board of Trade Department, and periodically deliberate upon all matters relating to the fishing industry. He suggested that some special arrangement should be arrived at, whereby all the wants of fishermen might be brought fully before the President of the Board of Trade and the House, through that Minister, who would then be fully in touch with the industry. The Statutory Board which existed in Scotland was a source of constant grumbling amongst Scotch fishermen, because the fishermen were not represented on the Board. If a Board could be composed of the chairmen of the local associations, to meet periodically at the Board of Trade, any such difficulty would be got rid of. There could be no doubt that fishermen had very great grievances, and if this Board was constituted, all questions, including railway rates, could be properly and periodically discussed. He might remark, with reference to the advantages which Continental fishermen had over the English, that when in Italy he had been supplied daily with beautiful fresh turbot at prices cheaper than those of his fishmonger in the West of London, and he had reason to believe that the fish was caught in English waters. He thought that showed the great advantages foreigners had for cheap and quick transit and the superior facilities for the distribution of fish. Fish was an article which greatly varied in value, and it depended a good deal on when you valued it, whether in the morning, afternoon, or night. He had recently received from fish salesmen in Sheffield and other districts of Yorkshire, and from the Midland Counties, sale statistics of fish, showing that, after the cost of carriage and the profits of the middle-man, the fisherman got nothing, or nearly nothing, for his labour. It was very deplorable that the cost of carriage and the middle-man should swallow up all the profits and leave the fisherman almost without remuneration, and it was exceedingly desirable that, if anything could be devised to keep these local councils in complete touch with the Board of Trade, it should be adopted, as it would be a distinct public advantage. He believed that great improvement had taken place during the last few years under the direction of the new department, and he hoped the prospects of the industry would improve still further, and that the present President of the Board of Trade would see his way to accept his suggestion, and bring the Department into direct contact periodically in the elected representatives of the fishing industry. If the Treasury would be sufficiently liberal to enable the Board of Trade to make such scientific investigations as might be necessary, he believed it would promote the success of the industry.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, that the House was greatly indebted to his hon. Friend for bringing before it a subject relating to one of the most important industries of the Kingdom—a subject in which, for many years past, his hon. Friend had taken an active interest, and which he had practically promoted, representing the fishing industry in that House. Having listened very carefully to the discussion, one result presented itself very clearly to his mind, and that was that, whatever opinion might be formed of the state of affairs two years ago, before the right hon. Gentleman opposite undertook to bring the various Departments connected with the fishing industry under the care of the Board of Trade, there still existed a large amount of dissatisfaction and a desire to strengthen the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade in the manner indicated by his hon. Friend. His hon. Friend divided his Motion into two parts. The first complained of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella), and asserted that the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade, as now constituted, was not in accordance with the scheme by which the control of the fisheries was transferred to the Board of Trade. That was practically an imputation upon the right hon. Gentleman opposite of not having carried out the undertaking he gave to the House when the subject was discussed two years ago. Having consulted the debates which took place on that occasion, and having made himself acquainted with the present constitution of the Fishery Department of the Board Trade, he must say, in justice to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that he thought he had carried out, not only to the letter but in the spirit, every engagement he gave to the House. He found the inland fisheries under the Home Office and the sea fisheries scattered among several Departments of the Board of Trade. He brought them all together by instituting a separate Fishery Department of the Board of Trade, and putting at the head of it a gentleman of great ability and recognized experience, Mr. G. J. Swanston, to whom a well-deserved tribute has been paid. Then the right hon. Gentleman employed well-qualified persons as Inspectors of both inland and sea fisheries. Following that action of the right hon. Gentleman, there had been, he thought, a distinct improvement, which quite justified him in saying that the Department since that change had been more in touch with the fishing industry than before. The negotiations as to the North Sea Convention and as to the unfortunate differences with the Belgian fishermen and other matters signally showed the good that had been done by centralizing this Department. On behalf of the Department, he was bound to say that, in considering any question that might arise in connection with fishing interests or regulations, or other matters of that kind, the Department invariably communicated with the representatives of the local associations, the smack-owners, the fishermen, or other persons interested in the industry in order to avoid those mistakes which undoubtedly arose in previous years from acting without concert with those having practical knowledge of the subject. He could instance many matters in which this had been done, such as the requirement of arrangements for stanchions and life-lines, regulations for ballast, and other things which none but practical men could understand. As regarded the collection of statistics he thought the improvement that had been made had not been fairly considered; there were no statistics as to sea-fishing at all three years ago, and now they had the Return he held in his hand made every year. He was far from saying that what had been done was sufficient. All he was anxious to establish was that the right hon. Gentleman did carry out the undertaking he gave, and, therefore, was not open to the censure which the first paragraph of the Resolution sought to cast upon him. With respect to the second paragraph of the hon. Baronet's Resolution, it affirmed that—

> "To secure the proper management and development of the Fisheries of England and Wales they should be placed under an authority comprising, in addition to the officials of the Board of Trade, persons with practical knowledge of the Sea and Inland Fisheries,"

Upon that he might observe that it could be interpreted, and it had been interpreted, in different ways by different Speakers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) interpreted it as entirely abolishing the connection of fisheries with the Board of Trade and placing them under a Fishery Department, which, as he understood, would be a part of the Agricultural Department.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that he expressed the opinion that the Fishery Department should be separated from the Board of Trade, but in the meanwhile he supported the proposal of the hon. Baronet.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said that the right hon. Gentleman had been perhaps a little unfair in his references to negotiations with foreign Powers; lately, at least, there had been no complaint to make as to prompt action in such matters; but whatever Department had the control of the fisheries it would be necessary for that department to have recourse to the Foreign Office in all negotiations with foreign Powers. Another interpretation put upon the Resolution by the right hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) was that an English Fishery Board should be established on the model of the Scotch Fisheries Board, comprising various persons of a *quasi*-independent character, who should have control of the English fisheries. He must say that that was a pattern he should not like to follow. He did not believe in the utility of such a board, either as a representative or an administrative institution. It would be absolutely impossible that all the various interests, or even a large portion of them which would require representation, could be brought on a paid or even on an unpaid Board. Some would certainly complain, as fishermen in Scotland now complained, that they were not properly or sufficiently represented, and whatever the interests left outside, the claims for admittance could not possibly be conceded. An unpaid Board containing a large number of members would undoubtedly be an administrative failure, and the real administration would go into the hands of the paid members just as it did on certain Boards with which he was well acquainted in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had affirmed that Ireland had a fishery board. That was not so. There was a staff of inspectors precisely as in England, but there was not the same description of Board as in Scotland. His hon. Friend himself seemed to interpret the Resolution as being in favour of the institution of Local Councils, which should have certain powers, subject to the Board of Trade, in dealing with fishery matters, and which should send their chairmen or other representatives to consult with the Board of Trade. He fully shared that view, and he believed in the necessity for early legislation in this matter. He quite agreed that the recommendations of the Trawling Commissioners had been too long left unnoticed by the House, and he was now preparing a measure to deal with the matter from the point of view of his hon. Friend, which he hoped shortly to be able to lay before the House. How far it would be possible to give local councils power in such matters it would be difficult to say. He admitted all the difficulties urged by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, for it was obvious that sea fisheries were not of so purely local a nature as affairs which they would allow Local Councils to regulate. Some power such as was possessed by the fishing authorities of Ireland and Scotland for laying down regulations for the protection of the coast fisheries was required for England. In any measure dealing with this subject he would take care to introduce provisions for the utilization of that local practical knowledge to which the hon. Member attached so much importance and which he himself valued as highly as the hon. Member did. He should like to see either the chairmen of the suggested councils or the representatives of the different associations who had taken such an active part in bringing forward proposals for the protection of our fisheries brought periodically into close communication with the Board of Trade and himself, in order that they might give them the assistance of their practical knowledge of the subject. That, however, was a different thing from establishing a statutory Board, and was, to his mind, a much better proposal. There were many other points connected with the Fishery Department which had not been touched upon which he need do no more than mention at the present moment. He did not think that the present arrangements for collecting fishery statistics were perfect. The grant was to some extent wasted, owing to the inadequacy of the statistics collected, but with the expenditure of a little more money, which he hoped to obtain, this might be amended. The sum of £5,000, and an annual grant of £500 for five years, had been provided to enable experiments connected with our sea fisheries to be conducted. That was a grant that might be enlarged, it always being kept in mind that those experiments were not mere scientific investigations, but were intended to have a practical effect in increasing the food supply of the country. With regard to the question of police, he thought that the relation between the Admiralty and the Department which was responsible for the control of the fisheries might be somewhat closer than it was at present; but he doubted whether it would be possible to establish a separate fleet for the police service of the fisheries. Indeed, there were practical difficulties in the way of establishing such a fleet that appeared hardly to have been considered by those who had suggested that one or two police vessels should be attached to the Department. He did not mean to imply that the Admiralty were not perfectly ready to meet the requirements of the Department. He hoped the hon. Member would not think it necessary to press his Motion to a Division, inasmuch as the Government could not accept the first part of it on the ground that it contained an implied censure upon the right hon. Gentleman opposite, which was unmerited, and because the second part was so vague and so capable of different interpretations, that if he accepted it, the hon. Member might come down next year and charge him with having failed to perform something which he had never intended to do. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. Member would be contented with the discussion he had raised, the opinions he had elicited from the various hon. Members who had taken part in the debate, and with the statement he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had made on behalf of the Government of his intention to deal with the subject.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, that he had been chairman of a Commission appointed to inquire into our sea coast fisheries, of which the distinguished naturalist, Professor Huxley, had been a member, and their object had been to obtain information with reference to the habits and the character of the different fish on our coasts. In the course of their inquiries they ascertained that, although they could depend upon the local fishermen for information as to the mode of capturing fish, those men knew nothing of the nature and habits of the fish they caught. To take one instance in illustration of his statement, the Commissioners found that there was a close time, lasting several months, for herrings on the west coast of Scotland, which had been enacted at the instance of the fishermen themselves, but that that close time prevented the fishing for cod and ling, because at that time, when herrings prevailed, they could only be caught by herring bait, and that could not be got on account of the close time. They were great devourers of the herring, and got this advantage of the close time for themselves, which was not intended by the law. We did not know the number of cod or ling in the sea, but we knew how many were salted and dried. Now, giving to these the moderate diet of six herrings daily, they would have destroyed, had they been left in the ocean, more than were caught by all the fishermen of the Kingdom, and 600 added. This view of the case astonished practical fishermen, and close time was abandoned by a repeal of the Act. He wished to draw attention to the fact that in America they had established a Commission for fisheries which had largely contributed to increase the fishing industry of that country. That Commission did not ask the fishermen about the habits and character of the fish, because they knew that it was no use to do so; but they asked Nature. At a cost of some £70,000 per annum, £40,000 of which was contributed by the Federal Government, and £30,000 by the different States, they sent out vessels for the purpose of examining into the habits and the character of the fish. By dint of experiments they found that cod, which was the most important fish on the American coasts, would, like other fish, always return to spawn at the spot where they were hatched, and that by taking spawn from the coasts of Newfoundland, where the cod was accustomed to spawn, and transplanting it to the American coasts, where it was hatched, they educated or naturalized the cod into always returning to the American coast to spawn, instead of going off into the cold waters of Newfoundland for that purpose. The cod that so returned to the American coasts to spawn were known as the Commissioners' cod. Let him give one other illustration. The American shad was a fish very much valued, especially by the working classes. This fish would only spawn in waters of a particular temperature, or within a range varying six or seven degrees. If the sea became too hot or too cold, the shad deserted the coast and went out to sea to spawn, and two or three years afterwards a famine of shad results. By watching the temperature of the sea on the coasts, the Commission knew what the shad would do, and if they migrated, steamers were sent after them; the shad were caught and stripped of spawn, which was brought back to the coast and hatched. So now there are no more shad famines. Thus the scientific experiments which had been conducted by the Commissioners had had the practical result of largely increasing the food supply of the country. He did not think that the small sum given by this country for the purpose of conducting similar experiments here contrasted well with the large sum which the Americans expended in the improvement of their fisheries. The example set by America in this matter had been followed by Germany and France. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would not think that in making the grant of £5,000 and £500 a-year for five years, enough had been done to promote the fishing industry of the United Kingdom.

Mr. AINSLIE (Lancashire, N. Lonsdale) said, that at the meeting which was held last week in his Division, under the presidency of the noble Lord the Member for West Derbyshire (Lord Edward Cavendish), it was arranged that the local Members representing the fishing constituencies bordering upon Morecambe Bay should bring this question before the House. He thought that every Member who represented a portion of the extensive fishery referred to should, he would not say support the Motion on the Paper, but, at any rate, draw the attention of the House to the position of the fishermen on that part of the coast. In the course of the discussion which took place at that meeting, one section of the fishermen complained against another, and they begged that some Local Authority should deal with the various questions arising. He believed that during last year a commission was sent down to the neighbourhood to inquire into the Fishery question; but, although inquiries were instituted, nothing had resulted, and the fishermen complained that although they had given their evidence, no action had been taken upon it. He knew the hopelessness of expecting to pass a Bill to deal with the question, but he was satisfied if it were possible to do so, that the verdict of the House would be in favour of the fishermen, who had a particularly strong case in the eyes of Members representing the part of the country in question.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, he hoped the Session would not be allowed to pass without the right hon. Gentleman making an attempt to bring forward this Bill and pass it into law. Not merely was it necessary for the Board of Trade to secure more scientific information and to publish statistics, but he thought it was important that the scientific information gathered by the Board of Trade should be published in an accessible form. He had noticed that the Report of the Scotch Fishery Department was much fuller, much more interesting, and more valuable than the information published by the Board of Trade. And that difference was still more apparent in regard to the American Fishery Board, who took much more trouble to publish what was necessary and interesting to the fishing trade. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had promised to form Local Councils, and he believed that these would inspire confidence on the part of the fishermen in the Board of Trade, and bring them to know that the information which scientific men could give them was of the most vital importance to their interests. He thought, if the right hon. Gentleman would make these Councils really representative, he would secure for the Department over which he presided the trust of the fishermen in the matter of the regulations and recommendations which they made. The present complaint was that, not merely had ill-regulated trawling ruined and impoverished the inshore fisheries, but that the fishermen had to pay for heavy and extortionate licences to the Board of Conservators, on which they had only a sham representation. If the right hon. Gentleman desired to have the Local Councils made of real value, they should be made representative, and then, as he had said, he would have the sympathy of the fishermen, and would be able to make them accept the valuable recommendations of men of Science.

The Earl of CAVAN (Somerset, S.) said, he thought the fishermen would be very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), but that they would not be thoroughly satisfied until Local Councils had been established throughout the whole of the counties on the coast of England. It would, in his opinion, be impossible to put a great deal of power into the hands of these Councils; but what the feeling of most fishermen was had been stated by his hon. Friend behind him (Sir Edward Grey), who said that the fishermen had a language of their own, ways of their own, and interests of their own, for which they wanted to find expression in that House, and until they had it they would not be contented. What was wanted, he (the Earl of Cavan) thought, was confidence in the minds of the fishermen in the action of the Board of Trade. They wished to see that their views, whatsoever they might be, were adequately represented on the Board of Trade. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad the right hon. Gentleman assented to that, because he regarded it as evidence that they had to-day made a very great step in advance; and he believed fishermen throughout the country would be exceedingly grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the position he had taken up. Not only with regard to the interest of the fishermen was it desirable that they should be heard, but also, in his opinion, with reference to naval affairs of the country. He thought they might look forward to great assistance being rendered to the country by our fishermen. If they were made to feel that in the event of depression occurring in their trade the Coast Guard or Naval Reserve forces were open to them, he felt that a body of men so intimately connected with the interests of the country, and so thoroughly acquainted with the coasts, would be of great use. He trusted that that class might now look forward to the establishment of Councils on which they would be adequately represented.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he hoped that there would be some authority having the power to deal with the fish question as a whole. It would not be placed on a satisfactory basis until they dealt with something nearer home than Nature. He had read the other day a communication by a fish merchant of Montrose, who seemed to have a thorough understanding of the question. That gentleman stated that a cod on the quay in Scotland cost about five-eighths of 1*d.*; when it arrived at Billingsgate, it was a little over 1*d.*; when it left Billingsgate Market, it cost 7*d.*, and was charged to the consumer at the West End at 10*d.* or 1*s.* a-pound. Therefore, he thought they would not bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion until they dealt with the practice at Billingsgate, as well as other important questions affecting the carriage of fish.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK said, he would ask leave to withdraw his Resolution, on the understanding that the President of the Board of Trade would, in the Bill which he proposed to introduce, insert a clause carrying out the proposals as to the Local Councils. He presumed that the chairmen and deputy chairmen of the Local Councils would, whenever they attended in London at the Department, be compensated for their loss of time, and paid their expenses to London and back. He accepted that as an instalment of justice; and he would tell his right hon. Friend frankly that the Board of Trade were on their trial; that the fishermen would keep their weather eye open, as they did at sea; and that if the practical element were not introduced, the matter would be again brought before the House. He did not wish in any way to blame his right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Mundella), who, he thought, had done all he could in the three months during which he was at the Office; he simply wished to place it on record that during the two years which had elapsed since 1886, the practical element was not to be found at the Board of Trade. He also wished to confirm what he had said outside the House. He did not wish to say one word against Mr. Swanston or the Inspectors; and he felt sure that his right hon. Friend the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) entirely agreed with him. He said that Mr. Swanston had done his best, and that for what he had done the fishermen were thankful. He had been associated with that gentleman on the inquiry into the Belgian outrages, and he asserted that his duties had been carried out in a satisfactory manner.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) having intimated that the proposals for Local Councils would be practically carried out, he believed he would have no reason to complain of the result.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought his hon. Friend behind him (Sir Edward Birkbeck) had attached a rather more definite meaning to his words than he had intended them to have. He could not exactly state the precise form of Local Councils which it would be possible for him to propose, but his intention was to include a provision in the Bill for obtaining due representation of local wishes and feelings.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SUNDAY CLOSING ACTS (IRELAND)—SELECT COMMITTEE.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) said, he rose to move the Motion standing in his name—

> "That the Select Committee on Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland) do consist of Seventeen members, and that Mr. Edward Harrington and Mr. Sexton be added to the Committee."

He moved the Resolution, because the Committee as at present constituted was not in the ordinary sense of the word a fair one. To be a fair Committee, there should be at least a corresponding amount of opinion on both sides of the question. Judging by what he had seen, he considered there was a very great preponderance on the one side—in fact, there was twice as much on one side of the present Committee as there was on the other. The two hon. Members he desired to have added to the Committee were such as he was sure there could be no objection taken to. The hon. Member for one of the divisions of Kerry, by his close attention to the Business of the House and the great practical ability he brought to bear on all questions, ought to be admirably fitted to take a place on the Committee. With regard to the hon. Member for West Belfast, his capabilities and fitness were so well known that he hoped no hon. Gentleman would stand up in his place and object to that hon. Member being added to the Committee. They had already a precedent for the Motion which he had made. In 1877, on the Motion of the present President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who was then Chief Secretary for Ireland, a Committee similar to that was appointed; and some days afterwards a further Motion was made, similar to the one he was now making—that the Committee, instead of 15, should consist of 17, and that supplementary Motion was agreed to. He therefore contended he was not making any departure from a principle already established, and he accordingly moved the Motion standing in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland) do consist of Seventeen Members."—(*Mr. Peter M'Donald.*)

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, he rose to object to the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. P. M'Donald). The hon. Gentleman had made an imputation with regard to the constitution of a Committee which was now in existence, and which had already had two sittings. He (Mr. Biggar) might point out as an evidence that the contrary was the case, that the only divisions which had taken place were in favour of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. It was very well known that the usual mode of selecting a Committee of the kind, and the one which had been followed, was this—each particular Party as represented by its Whip nominated Members of their Party. The Licensed Vintners, through their Secretary, sent shoals of telegrams nominating eight Members whom they wished to have on the Committee. As he (Mr. Biggar) represented the Party led by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) as a Whip, he found out that the number of Members belonging to that Party who would be allowed on the Committee was four, and the first thing he did was to take the nominations of the paid Secretary of the Licensed Vintners, from which he took two names out of the four, and, of course, in fair play, he nominated two on the other side, whom he thought to be impartial. He thought, in doing so, he was acting in a fair and proper manner, and it was preposterous that such a Motion as this should now be moved by the hon. Gentleman behind him. If they had to squabble over every Committee, as to the opinions the Members held on particular questions, the result would be the whole time of the House would be occupied in discussions as to the selection of Members of Committees. The Committee was not moved by himself, but by a Member of the Government. An objection was made at the time the Committee was moved, by one of the hon. Members who now brought forward the Motion; some slight explanation was made, and then the hon. Gentleman did not feel it necessary to divide the House on the question; but they now came, after the Committee had had two sittings, and said they thought it desirable to get on two Gentlemen whose names were supplied by the paid Secretary of the Licensed Vintners. He (Mr. Biggar) had not taken the trouble to ask these two hon. Gentlemen their opinion, but he knew their names were supplied by the Secretary of the Vintners' Association. He appealed to the House to support the Committee as at present constituted; for, if the Motion were carried, the practical result would be this—that he would feel called upon to propose two other names to counterbalance the two names which the Licensed Vintners had nominated. The result would be that others would do the same, and they would have a large Committee of 30 Members instead of one of 15. The present Committee had been selected in the customary manner, and, under all the circumstances, he thought the House would unanimously reject the Motion.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.), in supporting the Motion, said he regretted to find that his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) considered it to be his duty to support what he (Mr. J. O'Connor) believed to be a cause of injustice. For the first time, the Member for West Cavan had exhibited to the House of Commons that spectacle. He denied altogether that there was any intention on the part of himself, or the hon. Member for North Sligo, to squabble over the composition of the Committee. He should be in the recollection of the House when he said that he had, on a former occasion, taken exception to the composition of the Committee which he had stated was, in his opinion, unequally and unfairly constituted. It was because of that, and the belief that the Committee was incapable of arriving at a fair and impartial conclusion, that Notice was there and then given of a Motion for increasing the number of its Members. He would give the reasons why they wished the two hon. Members added to the Committee, which was that they would bring to the consideration of the question an unprejudiced mind. His hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan had stated that there had been already two divisions in the Committee, and that they were in favour of the hon. Member for North Sligo; but what they looked forward to was the Report of the Committee, that by evidence and the elucidation of the truth, to so modify the Report of the majority of that Committee as to strengthen the Report of the minority. There were at present altogether eight Members from Ireland, or about one-half of the whole number, on the Committee; but he maintained that as the question was an Irish one, and ought to be decided from an Irish point of view, there ought to be a majority of Irish Members on the Committee. In what position did the eight Irish Members stand with regard to that view of the question? Six of them were hostile to the interests to be investigated, and two only had any sympathy with them. He denied that that was a fair proportion, and maintained that they were justified in asking that the Committee should be strengthened by the addition of two men who were unconnected with the trade, and who could bring to the consideration of the subject impartial minds. The hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) was Lord Mayor of Dublin, and the hon. Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) was a journalist. Their names were selected because they were known to be impartial men. He had said that the Members for Ireland were in the proportion of six to two as regarded opinion on the subject. He, therefore, had no objection to some others being put on the Committee. One Member of the Committee had brought in a Bill dealing with a certain section of the liquor traffic. It was quite right that that hon. Gentleman should be on the Committee, because his Bill would be referred to; but he wished to bring before the House another fact in connection with the Committee—that not only were the Members for Ireland unequally divided, but they had been selected from the Liberal Party above the Gangway, and among them were four Gentlemen antagonistic to the interests they had to investigate, and four were advocates of the temperance cause. In the face of these facts, he would ask the House to consider the fact that they were only making a reasonable request in seeking the addition to the Committee which his hon. Friend desired. For these reasons he begged to support the Motion.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he opposed the Motion, and wished to point out that the work which the Committee had to inquire into was the operation of the Sunday Closing Act. The evidence was not matter of opinion; it was mere matter of fact with which the Committee would have to deal. He would like to remind the House with regard to the precedent quoted by the Member for North Sligo, that when the President of the Board of Trade moved the addition of two names to the Committee in 1887, the right hon. Gentleman was careful not to take two men holding the same opinions, but to take one on each side of the question, whereas there was now an attempt to put two hon. Members holding distinctive views on the Committee. He hoped that inasmuch as the selection had been made in the proper manner the Motion would be rejected, that the House would adhere to the present constitution of the Committee, and allow it to proceed with its work.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 9; Noes 173: Majority 164.—(Div. List, No. 63.)

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882 (BELL RESIDUE BEQUEST).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox), in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold her consent from the scheme for the management of the endowment known as the Bell Residue Fund, now lying upon the Table of the House;"

said, the Rev. Dr. Bell left a considerable sum of money for the purpose of promoting the educational system of Scotland. The benefits of his system of instruction were not intended to be confined to any particular locality, but were for the people of Scotland; and in the foundation it was stated that the towns to be benefited were Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Aberdeen, Leith, and St. Andrew's. The trustees founded a Professorship of Education in the University of Edinburgh, with an endowment of £6,000, and they also founded a Chair of Education in the University of St. Andrew's, with an endowment of £4,000. After making these and other provisions under various schemes which have been made up by the Educational Endowments Commissioners, there still remained a considerable sum, which was known as the Bell Residue Fund, and under the scheme now before the House it was proposed to give to the Chair in Edinburgh University a further endowment of £4,500, and to the Chair in St. Andrew's University a further endowment of £3,000. The opposition to this scheme arose on the part of Glasgow and of Glasgow University. They objected to it only in so far as regarded the application of the residue to the Chair in St. Andrew's; they did not object to the scheme in so far as it gave an additional endowment to the Chair of Education in Edinburgh, because they felt that the Chair in Edinburgh was a most useful one, and that it was promoting the benefit of education in Scotland; but it was pointed out that the Chair in St. Andrew's University was practically a Chair without students. St. Andrew's University was in no way suited for the purposes of a Chair of Education in Scotland. There were no Training Colleges in St. Andrew's, and a Departmental Committee of the Scotch Educational Department had reported against the formation of a Training College there, with the Professor of Education at the head of the College, because there were no students who would practically benefit by such a College in such a place. If they further endowed the Chair at St. Andrew's they would be giving simply a larger sum to the occupants of that Chair, who was holding a sinecure position. He had no doubt the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), who was Member for St. Andrew's University, would be able to tell them how many students were attending the Chair, and how many of these were connected with the teaching profession. He maintained that a Chair of Education at the University of Glasgow was of the utmost importance for Scotland. There was no reason why the money should not be allocated to Glasgow University. There was nothing in the nature of the endowment making it locally applicable to St. Andrew's. It was of a wide-spread character, and might be employed in any University for the general benefit of education in Scotland; and he maintained that the money could be more usefully employed by having a Chair of Education at Glasgow. With regard to Glasgow as a field for such a Chair, there were in that city two Training Colleges, which contained a very large number of the students trained in Scotland. In the year 1886 there were no fewer than 94 students attending these Training Colleges who were attending the University of Glasgow as students. In addition to that, during the past few years there had been from 25 to 40 assistant masters of the Glasgow School Board attending the University of Glasgow, and there had been from six to 10 assistant masters of the Govan School Board also attending the Glasgow University, besides assistant masters from Maryhill, Renfrew, and other districts; so that if they had a Chair of Education at Glasgow, they had a large attendance ready to take advantage of it. The Institute of Education in Scotland had reported in favour of the necessity of such a Chair in Edinburgh. The Chair also made provision for the attendance of the mistresses of the schools at the lectures, and there were a large number of these connected with the Glasgow School Board. It was not in the interests of Glasgow University by itself that he made this claim. The Glasgow University Authorities would not reap a penny of advantage from such an endowment, which he advocated solely in the interests of the public, and the whole of the money would go to the occupant of that Chair. Nor would the endowment of that Chair be of exclusive benefit to Glasgow or the West of Scotland, because the students who were trained in the Glasgow Training Colleges were trained, not for Glasgow alone, but for the whole length and breadth of Scotland. It was possible to give even more widespread importance to the Chair from the circumstance that the lectures did not necessarily require to be given during the day, but might be given in the evening and on Saturdays. The Edinburgh University Chair of Education had been fully recognized and accepted by the Department in connection with the training of teachers, and it entered as an element into the course for the schoolmaster's diploma instituted by the University, so that the students attending the Training Colleges in Glasgow were placed at a disadvantage as compared with the students attending the Training Colleges at Edinburgh, because they had not the benefit of this class in the University and had not the benefit of obtaining this diploma. It so happened that the number of students attending Glasgow University was very much greater than those who were attending Edinburgh University. No one who looked at the matter from a purely national point of view—from the point of view of what was the best method of disposing of this sum to the greatest possible advantage—could come to any other conclusion than that it would be of far greater importance to give this money for the purpose of founding a Chair in Glasgow University than for the purpose of supplementing a Chair which practically was a nonentity, so far as its usefulness in education was concerned, in St. Andrew's. When the scheme was approved by the Commissioners, the Glasgow University Authorities lodged objections with the Scottish Educational Department, setting forth the views which he had now communicated to the House. The Glasgow University got a note simply acknowledging receipt of their objections; but nothing more had been heard from the Department in reply to these objections until the scheme appeared in the newspapers as having been approved by the Department. He had put a Question to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate yesterday as to whether the scheme had been laid before the Scottish Education Department at a duly constituted meeting, and had been duly considered by them along with the objections by the University of Glasgow. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate's answer was that the Department only had before them important matters; but any small matters, such as these schemes, it was not necessary to lay before a meeting of the Department, but they were considered by the Vice President. He would point out to the House that, by the Education Endowments Act, it was laid down that a scheme, after having passed the Commissioners, must be approved of by the Scottish Education Department, which was to hear all parties interested, and that their judgment would practically be a judgment of a Court after having fully considered all the objections that had been stated. In this particular instance he ventured to say not a single member of the Scottish Education Department, barring one at any rate, ever saw the scheme or the objections, or duly considered them. According to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, these schemes were not considered by a meeting of the Scottish Education Department, but were handed over to the Vice President. He (Mr. Caldwell) said that was not in compliance with the spirit of the Act. When a scheme of this importance to the educational interests of Scotland was brought before the Education Department, and when authorities like those of Glasgow University appeared as objectors to the scheme, they were entitled to have their interests heard and determined by the Scotch Education Department, sitting in their judicial capacity and in formal meeting. This was precisely what the people of Scotland complained of—that the matters relating to Scotland were left to be treated alone by a permanent Secretary, and that the interests of Scotland were in no way heard by those who ought to give them the benefit of their due deliberations. When the matter came before the House of Commons, it was almost useless to object, because here, again, the Government had made up their minds that the scheme was to pass, and when they had once approved of it, on however insufficient information, it was defended by the Government in the House, and when the Division Bell was rung the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had the Government Whips at his back, who would bring in hon. Members—who knew nothing of the subject—from the different rooms, who would vote down the Scotch Business, notwithstanding that in many instances there were three-fourths of the people of Scotland on both sides of politics represented. This was why the people of Scotland sympathized so much with the claims of the people of Ireland, because they felt that important matters were often dealt with by one or two officials, and did not get the attention they deserved. He maintained that when they looked to the nature of the endowment, to the fact that it was given by the Rev. Dr. Bell for the purpose of promoting education in Scotland, it was not fulfilling the object of the founder to give the money to St. Andrew's. They did not object to the application of the money so far as Edinburgh University was concerned, but as regarded the balance of the residue, they maintained that to give it to St. Andrew's University was to give it to a purpose that would produce no possible public benefit to the people of Scotland or to education, and that if the money were to be applied for the benefit of a Chair in Glasgow it would be a means of stimulating education in Scotland, and finding a University training to probably the largest number of students that could be brought together in any University. He, therefore, moved that the scheme be not approved of.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the Scheme for the Management of the Endowment known as the Bell Residue Fund, now lying upon the Table of the House."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) said, he would leave the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate to deal with the latter part of the hon. Member's speech. He would not enter on the mode of administration of the Scottish Education Department; but in regard to the Motion itself, he was in this delicate position that, having the honour to represent the University of Glasgow, he must on this occasion appear to go against his own constituents. He felt that his hon. Friend opposite had not given quite a full account of the circumstances under which the Commissioners, of whom he had the honour to be one, had constructed this scheme. It was not quite a correct statement of the facts to speak of the great bequests of Dr. Bell as not confined to any particular locality, but intended for the use of Scotland as a whole. Dr. Bell left one very large bequest, which he specifically allocated. It was a bequest of £120,000 in Stocks, and it was divided into twelfths. Of these twelfths no fewer than six, or one-half of the whole, he allocated in one way or another to St. Andrew's. One-twelfth each was given to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness, Leith, and to the Royal Naval School in London. Of the half given to St. Andrew's 5-12ths were given to the Madras College, which he directed his trustees to found, and the remaining twelfth to the Town Council of St. Andrew's, towards the moral and religious improvement of the City, and for useful and permanent works there. It was not correct, therefore, to say that there was no local allocation in the bequest of Dr. Bell. On the contrary, there was a very strong expression of Dr. Bell's particular interest in the City of St. Andrew's. Now, he agreed with all that his hon. Friend had said as to the importance of having a Chair of Education at Glasgow, and as to the great usefulness of such a Chair to the whole of Scotland. But the question was not whether a Chair of Education was to be founded at Glasgow, but whether that Chair was to be founded with Dr. Bell's money. The great bequest of £120,000 was given by Dr. Bell specifically; but the residue of his estate he left his Trustees to deal with, giving them full discretionary powers. When the Educational Endowments Commissioners came to deal with this residue they found that in 1876—12 years ago—Dr. Bell's Trustees had founded two Chairs of Education—one in Edinburgh and the other in St. Andrew's. They found, however, that these Chairs were quite inadequately endowed. Dr. Bell's Trustees had expected that their endowment of the Chairs would have been supplemented by a grant from Her Majesty's Treasury, but in this respect they had been disappointed. The Commissioners further found that the Madras College also was inadequately endowed, and had ceased, in great measure, to have the character which Dr. Bell intended it to have—namely, that of a secondary school. They considered, therefore, they were doing the best thing under the circumstances, in the interests of education, and at the same time having regard to the founder's intentions, by giving one-half of the residue, or a little more than half, towards the better endowment of the Madras College, so as to make it really a secondary school, and by giving additional endowments to the two Education Chairs which had been founded by Dr. Bell's Trustees. The selection of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's was not a matter the Commissioners were responsible for. The hon. Member had reflected on the usefulness of the Chair at St. Andrew's. No doubt, St. Andrew's was a small place compared with Edinburgh or Glasgow But it must be remembered that the Chair was very inadequately endowed. What could they expect from a Professorship with only £180 a year of endowment? With a better endowment there was also the prospect of better circumstances for St. Andrew's. There was a connection with Dundee now by the Tay Bridge which did not formerly exist; and if the Universities Bill went forward, and the provisions of that Bill were carried out, there was the prospect of the affiliation of the University College of Dundee with the University of St. Andrew's, so that there would be a much larger constituency to draw upon for a Chair of this kind. The Commissioners dealing with this residue fund did what they considered to be their duty under the circumstances, fulfilling the wishes of the founder in completing what was left incomplete by his Trustees, improving the endowment for the Madras College, and completing the endowment of the two Educational Chairs.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he thought the hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell) was somewhat under a mistake in the view he took about the duty of the Education Department to hear all the parties interested. He did not think the Act of Parliament could be interpreted to mean that all the parties who might come forward and make a claim on the funds could be held to have an interest. Otherwise, he thought the Scottish Education Department might have a great deal more work to do than was reasonable to expect from them. As regarded the facts of this case, there could be no doubt that his hon. Friend was quite right in saying that it might be a very useful thing for the City of Glasgow to have a Chair of Education; but what astonished one in this case was to find that no step had even been taken on the part of that great and wealthy City to supply that want. The first and only step that had been taken in that direction had been to propose that the old endowed Chair in St. Andrew's should not get its fair share of the residue of the Bell Estate, but that it should be handed over to the Glasgow University, for the purpose of starting them in the enterprize. He could not think that was a reasonable or proper proposition at all on the part of the Glasgow University. His hon. Friend (Mr. J. A. Campbell) said he was in a delicate position in this matter, because he represented Glasgow University. He was afraid that he (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) personally was in a still more delicate position, because he represented the two Universities which got the benefit of this fund for the purposes of the Chair of Education. As regarded Edinburgh, he understood no objection was taken. The object of the hon. Member was to bring to an end the Professorship of Education in St. Andrew's. It was impossible—if the intention of the founder was to be carried out—to set the Professorship at St. Andrew's on a different footing from that of the Chair at Edinburgh.

Mr. CALDWELL said, the Chair was only founded in 1876; so that the University would not be in a worse position than it was before then.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the same remark applied to Edinburgh. He was speaking entirely of the comparison between Edinburgh and St. Andrew's.

Mr. CALDWELL said, that his argument was that he did not object to Edinburgh getting the endowment, because that University was doing useful work for Scotland; whereas in the case of St. Andrew's there were practically no students at all.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, it was quite obvious that the more they brought forward the argument that the St. Andrew's Chair had not very many students, the clearer they made it that without a reasonable endowment the Chair could not be carried on. He demurred altogether to the idea that the sole duty of a Professor was to teach a very large number of students. He ventured to think that, upon a very great number of occasions, a Professor's duties were infinitely better fulfilled to a small than to a large number of students, and particularly with regard to such a Chair as Education. It was extremely valuable to have a Chair of that nature, not merely for the purpose of developing education in the way of teaching the actual students in the class, but also of developing a system of education by a man devoted to that particular work. They knew perfectly well that the class which Professor Meikeljohn taught in St. Andrew's was far larger than that which many German Professors of as great eminence as any in this country had to teach for far smaller fees. Moreover, the development of St. Andrew's as a University was a thing which they had not only reason to hope for, but to expect within a very short time. That development was likely to be brought about soon through the practical amalgamation with the pushing and vigorous College of Dundee, which was one of the great centres of population, industry, and wealth in Scotland. St. Andrew's was a University for which everyone who was a real Scotsman had a sincere regard, and he was quite sure that if his hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) had not had in view the interests of a University nearer home, he would have been the last man to do anything that would cause the slightest injury to St. Andrew's. As regarded Glasgow, he would like to have seen in the case of a vast community, teeming with wealth and abounding with energy, that the citizens themselves had taken some step to equip their University in the first instance before they made a grab at the Bell Fund, which undoubtedly would leave the Chair in St. Andrew's, which had been established for many years, in a state of starvation as regarded endowment. Not only so, but Glasgow would not get a sum at all adequate for the establishment of a Chair. Perhaps his hon. Friend would say that they would have a very large class of students, and therefore would not require a very great endowment fund. In that case they would not require an endowment at all.

Mr. CALDWELL said, he did not propose to establish any Chair without an endowment, and he was certain the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be the last person to sanction a Chair without a substantial endowment.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, his argument was that there would be no need for an endowment if there were this large class of students paying fees. His hon. Friend knew perfectly well that there were a great number of Chairs in Scotland at the present moment, of which the remuneration obtained by the Professors from fees was so large that they not only did not require an endowment, but unquestionably the Professors drew too large an income from the position they held. If there had been a clamant call in Glasgow for a Chair of Education, and the matter had been pressed forward as it should have been, no one could question that a full endowment would have already been provided for the Chair. He feared it was the fact that they had been rather sluggish in thinking about the establishment of this Chair, and that it was only when they had the prospect of getting something to set it agoing that they found out the great need they had for it. He trusted that in course of time Glasgow would have a Chair of Education; but if a start were to be given he hoped that Aberdeen, with its necessities, would come in for some share of attention. He begged that the House would not yield for one moment to the proposal of Glasgow that it should take away practically from the University of St. Andrew's that which would make it a reasonable and well-endowed Chair, especially in view of the fact that in the immediate future there would be a great development of teaching in connection with the University of St. Andrew's, which would be brought into connection with that great centre of population, Dundee. He must meet the Motion of his hon. Friend with a direct negative.

Mr. C. S. PARKER (Perth) said, he regretted that the discussion should have taken place in the presence of so few Scottish Members — probably not more than a dozen. He was afraid that would frequently be the case in appeals against the decision of the Endowment Commissioners on questions in which the general public did not take any great interest. That was the fact, and he was afraid this question would have to be settled by the votes of the English Members, with very small help from the Scottish Members. The scheme they were considering had to do not only with the Chairs of Education, but also with Madras College, St. Andrew's. It ought to be remembered how much the founder of the Bell Fund had at heart the interest of that College, and the scheme of education which he intended to be conducted; and that he intended that institution ought to be not merely of the nature of a primary school, but a higher College. In a letter to a friend, Dr. Bell said he hoped the College would draw families to St. Andrew's for the higher education of their children. If this Resolution were adopted, that portion of the founder's intention would be overthrown, and the money given to the larger City of Glasgow at the expense of the smaller. He regretted that on both sides hard language had been used. The hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell), who brought forward the Motion spoke too slightingly of St. Andrew's as a place of education. The hon. Member misrepresented the nature of the Report of the Departmental Committee, over which he had the honour to preside. It was true the Committee did not see their way to recommend that the University of St. Andrew's should become a Training College, which was the ambition they had. While the Committee opposed that, they at the same time brought before the Department the fact that in St. Andrew's there was a great deal being done, of course on a somewhat small scale, for education. It was mentioned in the Report that there were as many as 86 graduates belonging to St. Andrew's engaged in the teaching profession. The class for the education of teachers had risen to as large a number as 22, which, compared with some of the German Universities, was a very respectable number to pass through a Professor's hands to become teachers, and was sufficient justification for keeping a Professor of Education. Beyond that, there were hopes of extension through the more direct connection with Dundee by the opening of the Tay Bridge, from which town students were likely to seek their training in St. Andrew's. Besides, the Professor of Education was perfectly willing to make himself useful to the large class of female teachers and students whom they were hoping to actract, especially during the part of the year when the University was closed. He felt bound to bear witness that there was adequate employment there for a Professor of Education. He thought St. Andrew's had a very good claim upon the Fund, both for Madras College and the Chair of Education. The hon. Member said he had no objection to the endowment of the Chair at Edinburgh. It seemed to him they would do a mischievous and injurious thing if they were to throw out the scheme, and reject the judgment of the Endowment Commissioners, merely because Glasgow also stood in need of a Chair of Education. He thought the hon. Member opposite had been too severe on Glasgow claiming a share in this Fund. It seemed to him natural they should do so. He regretted, however, that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate spoke in so severe a tone of the University of Glasgow coming forward to take a share in this Fund. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said Glasgow ought to find the money from their own funds, and when they considered the great wealth of Glasgow there was much to be said for that; but it should be remembered that Glasgow had shown no slowness to come forward in that way. He was bound to say they had set an example to all Scotland by the liberal spirit in which Glasgow School Board had been conducted. Their High School was a model of what could be done by a School Board in connection with higher education. Their ordinary schools were rising very much in education, and the whole administration in Glasgow was admirable. Whether the Glasgow School Board had a strong conviction on the subject of adding to the Training Colleges and the University teaching, he was not informed on the point, but no doubt they were supporting the University in this matter. He was willing to admit for argument to-night that a Professor of Education would have a larger field at Glasgow, and would render more service than it was possible for such a Professor to render at St. Andrew's; but he did not think on that account they ought to reject the decision of the Endowment Commissioners and the Education Department to follow the lead given by Dr. Bell's own Trustees, and to apply this small portion of the money to the Chair of Education in St. Andrew's. It was therefore his intention to support the Commissioners, and to vote against the Motion.

Mr. MUNDELLA, (Sheffield, Brightside) said, that this was purely a Scotch quarrel, but knowing something of the case he had some justification for taking part in the debate. He was very reluctant to interfere in what was entirely a Scotch question, but he would plead as an excuse the fact that he had been a Member of a former Council of Education for Scotland. No Royal Commission had done more good work than the Scotch Education Commission, and it seemed ungracious to criticize anything that had been done by them; but he confessed that in this case they had made a mistake. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had spoken of rich and wealthy Glasgow wanting to despoil the little City of St Andrew's. As a matter of fact, an additional £8,000 was going to the Madras College in St. Andrew's, which would make something like £70,000 which would go to St. Andrew's. When the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of the niggardliness of Glasgow he would remind him that the University of Edinburgh had done nothing for the Chair of Education. It had never spent a penny upon it. He agreed that St Andrew's had a prior claim, and the Commissioners had now granted an increased sum to St Andrew's, so that the interests of St Andrew's were not being neglected by the Commissioners. Dr. Bell's legacy was for a wide purpose, for the benefit of education in Scotland. What, then, could have been more serviceable to Dr. Bell's countrymen than to put a Chair of Education where it could be availed of by the largest number of those who were to be engaged in teaching. He could not speak too highly of Professor Meiklejohn's attainments, but what he objected to in this scheme was that they kept his light under a bushel at St Andrew's, where he would have comparatively nothing to do, instead of having him in a more richly endowed Chair in Glasgow.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the Commissioners had no power to remove that Chair to Glasgow. It was an endowed Chair in the University of St Andrew's.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, they could have endowed a Chair in Glasgow with this fund, and although it would have been poorly endowed the Chair would have received considerable fees from the students attending the University. It was not to Glasgow that the money would have gone, but to the benefit of teachers all over Scotland. He did not know any City in the United Kingdom where there was so much educational life as there was in Glasgow. Nowhere would such a Chair have been so well placed as in Glasgow, and hardly anywhere could it have been placed to so little advantage as in St Andrew's. If the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell) should go to a Division, he should—reluctant as he was to vote against any proposal by the Scotch Commissioners—vote with him, although he was afraid they would have little chance of doing more than making a protest.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, it was a most refreshing sight to find the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) opposing the scheme, as it was usual for officials, present or former, of the Education Department to be found on the other side. He (Dr. Cameron) had no hankering after Chairs of Education, because he believed the work of training teachers could be better done in the Normal Schools, where they got both instruction and practice. There was one practical point connected with the subject before the House. The Lord Advocate had a University Bill for them, which, of course, with the new Rules he was certain to carry; and that Bill would appoint a Commission to deal with University matters. Now, this Resolution would upset that scheme, for it would give the Educational Endowments Commissioners power in money matters connected with the Universities which would be better entrusted to the University Commissioners. The matter might, therefore, be fairly settled by allowing the Education Commissioners to say that a certain amount of the Bell residue should be devoted to the purposes of subsidising Chairs of Education in the Universities, and then that the allocation of the money among the Universities should be left to the Commission which the Lord Advocate was about to institute. If his Colleague would accept that suggestion, he would support the Motion; but otherwise he must decline to do so.

Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, the hon. Member was slightly anticipating when he assumed the existence of the new University Commission. For his part, he (Mr. Wallace) looked forward to that Commission with a certain amount of suspicion. But with regard to this Motion, he thought it was clear that if the people of Glasgow came to see the necessity of having a Chair of Education in Glasgow, they would, with their usual liberality, equip one for themselves; and, therefore, by refusing to give this assistance to St. Andrew's, a double mischief would be perpetrated, because they would omit an opportunity of strengthening the University of St. Andrew's, which had no wealthy friends in its midst; and they would take away the stimulus from Glasgow to equip a Chair for herself if they gave her this endowment. Moreover, from the close local connection of Dr. Bell with St. Andrew's, that place was the natural destination of the Bell Residue Fund; and they who desired, as he did, to keep endowments intended for the poor to the poor, and not give them to the comparatively rich, had that consideration on their side in supporting St. Andrew's in this matter. As to what had been said of the larger field for educational usefulness presented by Glasgow, there was no doubt some force in that; but he thought there was a great deal of truth in the contention of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate that, to some extent, the very smallness of a University was a strength to it, for this reason, that the Professors were more in the position of private tutors to their students than in the large Universities, where the classes were often utterly unwieldy. From his own knowledge of men who had passed through the Universities, he had no hesitation in saying that, compared with the numbers, the University of St. Andrew's and its teaching would bear a favourable comparison in respect to the position its students had occupied in the public life of Scotland with any of the other three Universities. He did not stand up for respecting the wishes of the pious founder absolutely and always; but he thought a certain reasonable latitude of time should be allowed before interfering with them, otherwise the benevolent intentions of such persons would be checked, and the public would be the losers. If ever the wishes of the pious founder should be respected, it was in the case of bequests left for the benefit of the poor. St. Andrew's was a poor University among the Universities of Scotland, and he had no doubt, if Dr. Bell were capable of expressing a desire, he would wish that St. Andrew's should obtain any assistance it could from the moneys left in his name. Altogether, it seemed to him that the Commissioners in this matter had done a wise thing. He felt perfectly confident that great good would be done to the University of St. Andrew's and to the cause of education throughout Scotland as represented in that University, and that no harm would be done in the meantime to the University of Glasgow.

Mr. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock, &c.) said, he hoped the House would reject the Motion. If he had any objection to the scheme, it was that enough had not been given to St. Andrew's. If the whole of the money had been given, that would have been carrying out the founder's bequest; and he was perfectly ashamed of the hon. Member representing the rich commercial city of Glasgow for his monstrous proposal to divide £7,090 between Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St. Andrew's Universities. Why had they not included Aberdeen? It was a pure piece of covetousness, and he did not believe the bloated merchant aristocrats of Glasgow would support his hon. Friend in this proposal.

Question put, and *negatived.*

VAGRANT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Charles Acland, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Caine.*)

[BILL 125.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. C. T. DYKE ACLAND (Cornwall, Launceston) said, that in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, he did not wish to detain the House more than a few moments; but it was a subject he had long had on the Notice Paper, and he was, therefore, anxious now that an opportunity had arisen, to bring it before the House. It would be remembered by many hon. Members now in the House, that in the year 1883, on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), certain Acts which dealt specially with certain diseases and certain places, were repealed. The Government of the day contemplated some further action, he believed, to remove whatever evil might have been the result of the repeal of those Acts; but subsequently the Government thought it right to abstain from taking action, and nothing whatever had been done from that day to this. He (Mr. Acland) had spoken in the debate which occurred upon the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, and protested strongly against the proposal of that right hon. Gentleman. He had been anxious that the good which was indirectly done by the Acts to which he referred, should not cease, and he had been moved to speak by the pressure of other persons and the interest he felt in the ports of Plymouth, Portsmouth, and elsewhere, representations having been made to him by clergymen, magistrates, and others who were anxious for the preservation of morality in these towns to the effect that the Contagious Diseases Acts were necessary from that point of view. He believed these persons were right in thinking that good was done indirectly by the Acts; but, on the other hand, he appreciated the strong agitation, he might say the invincible agitation, which had not yet ceased, and which at that time had sprung up against these Acts wherever they were in force. He agreed that they were a blot upon the Statute Book, standing as they did. The Bill of which he now moved the second reading was an attempt to minimize the evil effect which had been produced by simply repealing the Acts and leaving matters in that state that the result in our garrison and seaport towns had been a vast increase of immorality. In many places, especially in these garrison and seaport towns, it was perfectly impossible for young soldiers and sailors to go from their quarters to respectable recreation rooms, without being accosted and beset with temptations most difficult for them at their time of life, and with their immature judgments, to resist, and that upon every side. He believed that many young soldiers and sailors would get through their career without yielding to those temptations, were it not for the manner in which the temptations were brought in their way. He had given some attention to the manner in which measures had been taken to deal with this evil in other places. At one time, he had thought that the provisions of the Glasgow Act might be applied to other portions of the Kingdom; but, on looking into the details of that Act, he had found difficulties connected with the maintenance of houses of refuge and other matters which would render that particular measure impossible of general application. He had not attempted that, therefore; but the proposal in the Bill was that, where habitually and constantly a large number of people congregated for immoral purposes, and were known to congregate in certain places for those purposes, and to practice their trade to the annoyance and injury of persons living in those places, it should be possible for the inhabitants to complain of the annoyance to the police authorities, and that then the police authorities should be bound to take measures to mitigate the nuisance. Now, he knew there were many who thought themselves justified in believing that the police were not fit to be entrusted with this duty; but there was no other body that he knew of which could be trusted with it, and he could not believe that it was necessary in this country to leave unrestricted the constant daily and open exercise of a pernicious trade to the injury and annoyance of the people in whose neighbourhood it was carried on. It would be observed that in the clauses of the Bill the phrase "concourse and resort of numerous persons" was used. It might be said that "concourse" or "resort" were difficult to define, and that "numerous persons" was a vague phrase; but it was not necessary to use more definite phrases than either of these for the purpose of complaint. If a complaint could be sustained, it was simply necessary for the ratepayers to say that there was a concourse of persons to their annoyance. They had to prove this annoyance, and that, he thought, was a thing which could be easily proved, and he certainly thought, that if there were an annoyance, they had a claim to have it mitigated. Then, again, he had made it a point in the Bill to deal with both sexes alike. He believed one of the great defects of our law up to the present time had been that the main operation of the law had been directed against one sex alone. That was a great evil, and even if the Bill were reduced to this one clause, he should be glad that it should be passed; but he certainly did wish this to be borne in mind, that though it might be said that practically, in dealing with these matters, the police mostly went against one sex and not against the other, this was at least true, that the sex against which they proceeded were really plying a trade for their living, which was not to be said of the other sex. That, in his mind, made a very considerable difference between the sexes in this matter. He need hardly say more on this occasion. He thought he had explained sufficiently the intention of the Bill, and he only wished further to add this, that owing to the necessities of our trade and commerce and our military and naval defences, we were bound to have large aggregations of men in certain garrison towns and seaports at a time of life when the passions of the men were strongest and their judgments and experience were weakest. He should be glad if, by so doing he would be more likely to carry the Bill, to eliminate the Metropolis altogether from its provisions; for he admitted that London was a special case, and was too large for a private Member to deal with; but our garrison towns, he thought, in some way or other, might be allowed to be touched. He considered that the community had a claim upon the Government so far as those towns were concerned. The Government, for the purposes of the Army and Navy, brought heaps, he might say thousands, of young men into particular places under the circumstances he had just explained. These young men afforded a specially favourable field for the plying of that horrible trade to which he had adverted, and the result was that in our garrison towns were congregated nearly all the poor wretched girls who were ruined in other parts of the country. Having no chance of obtaining an honest livelihood in their own neighbourhood, they took to these places in the hope that they might be enabled somehow or other to survive. He hoped the Government, if they could not accept this Bill as it stood, would at least not allow the subject to escape their attention, considering that the position in which the questions had been left by the repeal of the Acts in 1883 was not a credit, but, on the contrary, a distinct evil to the nation, both morally and physically. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, he rose to second the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Acland). The Bill which the hon. Member had just proposed should be read a second time, dealt with a gigantic social evil in this country. The state of our large cities was disgraceful, and no such sights could be witnessed anywhere in Europe as were to be seen in the streets of London and of all the large cities of this country at night. He did not agree with his hon. Friend that London ought to be exempted from the operation of the measure, because he considered that the state of certain streets of the Metropolis at night was simply a disgrace to civilization. It was perfectly well known to those who had had to look into the social state of the Metropolis, that large sections of the city in the neighbourhood of Regent Street and Piccadilly after 12 o'clock at night became a perfect Alsatia. The streets swarmed with the vicious of both sexes, and it was almost impossible for respectable people to pass along without being insulted. He would just relate what had been told to him by an eminent clergyman of this town a little time ago. This gentleman, who had held a religious Watch Night Service at St. James's Hall, stated that as his congregation passed into the street on leaving, the women were insulted so outrageously that it was scarcely possible to protect them safely to their homes. Numbers of young men, respectably dressed ruffians, coming out of music halls and theatres, offered them gross insults. When the police were applied to for protection, they declared that they were powerless to interfere with the existing state of things, and this clergyman stated that undoubtedly the police either wanted the power or the will to take action, and he proposed that there should be a band of special constables formed for the purpose of grappling with this evil. He (Mr. S. Smith) was glad that the Bill of his hon. Friend dealt with both men and women, for the conduct of the male sex was often worse than that of the other. Those who had followed the evidence given before the Lords' Committee a few years ago were aware that Lord Shaftesbury and many others testified that it was a habitual practice of a number of young miscreants to wait at shop doors at night when shops were being shut, and follow the women who had come out to their homes, persecuting and molesting them wherever they went. So far as he knew, nothing had been done to abate this annoyance. Our young women had no protection against miscreants of this class, but this Bill proposed to deal with the matter. It might not do so in the most perfect way, but if anyone could propose a better, those who promoted the Bill would be exceedingly glad to hear of it. Many people took great objection to increasing the powers of the police. Well, he was quite aware that there were black sheep amongst the police, and he did not for a moment defend many things which had been done by them, and he thought there was grave reason indeed to inquire into the management of the force, but they required some machinery to put the law into motion, and he did not know if any better machinery than that proposed in the Bill existed. If anyone could invent a better, let them do so, but one thing was certain, they were bound to put down this intolerable evil. The fact was that there was a large part of this city in which young persons were subjected to such temptation that, unless something of the kind proposed in the Bill was done, it would become a second Sodom. Parts of London were a disgrace to civilization, and he did not think that anything worse existed in any part of the world. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. C. T. Dyke Acland.*)

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he rose to move that this Bill be read a second time that day six months. He respected fully the philanthropy of the hon. Gentleman who had just supported the Bill (Mr. S. Smith), but he had spoken as if the Bill were one for providing some means of punishing those young men who insulted and importuned young women. So far as the 2nd clause of the Bill was concerned, and so far as it would provide a means of punishing the men to whom the hon. Member referred, he (Mr. James Stuart) was sure the Bill would receive the support of all for whom he was entitled in any way to speak on this matter, although he could not see why the proposers of the Bill were not content with the enforcement of the existing penalties, but transferred the matter to the Vagrant Acts, unless their desire was to obtain a severer punishment. He should like the House to observe that, whereas under the existing Acts quoted in the Memorandum to the Bill, a 40*s.* fine or 14 days' imprisonment was capable of being inflicted, should this Bill become law the punishment would be raised to a month's imprisonment with hard labour. But the point on which he wished most distinctly to move the rejection of the Bill was not the equalization of the law as between men and women, of which he fully approved, for there were due safeguards which seemed to him to be fairly introduced in Clause 2 of the Bill, but because of Clauses 3 and 4. Now, there was a specious appearance about these Clauses 3 and 4, and as if they were in some way or other safeguarded. The House would observe that it was stated in the memorandum at the beginning of the Bill that the Bill proposed to deal with the matter by requiring annoyance to be proved in ordinary cases, and so on. Now there was an appearance there as if it would only be in extraordinary cases that Clause 4 would come into operation. Twelve ratepayers were indicated there as the persons who might put the clauses into operation, and when it was remembered that these ratepayers might reside anywhere within a mile's radius of the place they might refer to in their complaint, and when it was remembered that there were 250,000 residents within a mile's radius of a given point, it would be seen that the whole Metropolis could be brought under Clauses 3 and 4—and there could be no doubt, from the arguments of the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Bill, that steps would be immediately taken for placing certain districts to which he referred, under circumstances which it was quite unnecessary for him (Mr. James Stuart) to trouble the House with, under the operation of Clauses 3 and 4. Therefore they had to look upon it in this light—what was the meaning and what would be the operation of Clauses 3 and 4 of the Bill? Clauses 3 and 4 were simply to take away from the police in prosecuting any man or woman under this Act the necessity of bringing forward witnesses as to annoyance, because it would be observed that in the Memorandum it was stated that practically there was great difficulty in proving annoyance even in cases of obvious public nuisance, and the Bill was to remove by means of these clauses the necessity of proving that annoyance. Now, in the few remarks which had been made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), who had supported the Bill, the hon. Member had declared it to be almost impossible for persons to pass by in the streets in certain parts of London without being insulted. Well, surely if that were the case, it was possible to prove the annoyance or the insult from which those persons had suffered, and so far as the hon. Member's argument went, it was only an argument for the establishment or the adoption of the 2nd clause of the Bill, and in no sense whatever an argument for the adoption of the 4th clause. They were by the 4th clause of the Bill to put the crowded districts of the big towns of the country or of the Metropolis—and the hon. Member who had moved the Bill said he should be prepared to eliminate the Metropolis, though why he did so he (Mr. James Stuart) was at a loss to imagine, particularly, as from the observations of the hon. Member for Flintshire, it would appear most essential to deal with the condition of London—immediately under the control of the police. The 4th clause would give the police a freer hand in dealing with this question than they had before. There would, in fact, be no necessity resting upon them to prove annoyance. The hon. Member had spoken as if no way, no Act or law, existed in regard to this matter at the present time. It was said—"Could there be nothing done in London and nothing done in other large towns for removing the annoyance of solicitation?" But did hon. Members know what the law was in this matter?

The law was that a person should be liable to a fine of not more than 40*s.* or 14 days' imprisonment; and then a list of offences were given—he was speaking of the 2 & 3 *Vict.* c. 47—and amongst these offences was to be reckoned—

> "Every common prostitute or night-walker loitering or being in any public place for purposes of prostitution or soliciting to the annoyance of any person or persons."

If the police liked to enforce that law they had ample power to deal with the existing evil. When they saw the amount of blackmailing which the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine), whose name was on the back of this Bill, had attempted to prove—although he had not succeeded in his attempt—as against the police under the existing law, which he (Mr. James Stuart) had just read—if the hon. Member for Barrow was in his place, he would ask him whether he could imagine for a moment, whatever amount of blackmailing may exist now, it would not be enormously increased when there was less necessity for the police to bring proof of any accusations they might make? It was a well-known thing that a great deal of blackmailing did go on in this matter, although the hon. Gentleman the Member for Barrow-in-Furness had not succeeded in proving it; and there was no doubt that that would be increased wherever the police were released from the obligation of offering proof. And that held good not only in this country, but in all other countries where the system of police interference existed. The House was asked to endeavour to moralize a people by means of the police. [Mr. C. T. DYKE ACLAND dissented.] The hon. Member who had moved the second reading shook his head; but what was he going to do? He was going to give the police greater power of action in the endeavour to put a stop to immorality, because he was not going to call on individuals who were annoyed in the streets to come forward with their complaints, but intended to allow the police to proceed upon their own motion. That was certainly an endeavour, so far, to moralize society by means of the police.

MR. C. T. DYKE ACLAND: The police are only to take action on the complaint of certain ratepayers.

MR. JAMES STUART said, he thought he had pointed out how the safeguards against misuse of the powers contained in the Bill—the complaint of 12 ratepayers out of 250,000 within a circle of a mile—were wholly illusory. A dozen people out of such a number could at any time be got to make such complaint as was necessary under the Bill. They might let the police loose on the streets, and might make some sort of effort to deal with the scandal existing in some quarters of our large cities; but he asked the House to consider whether the causes of the evil they wished to eradicate, both amongst men and women, did not lie too deep to be removed by the action of the police, and whether solicitation would not elude the grasp of the police, however much they might leave that grasp unsafeguarded? However, he would content himself, without going further into the arguments, by saying that they had lately seen sufficient of the action of the police with respect to women to make them shrink entirely from giving them greater powers. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment moved, to leave out the word "now," in order to insert the words "this day six months."—(*Mr. James Stuart.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. H. T. DAVENPORT (Staffordshire, Leek) said, he rose to support the Motion for the second reading; and he would not say more than a few words, for the reason that the subject was one with which the House, unfortunately, was too familiar. They were, all of them, more or less acquainted with the arguments both for and against the Bill, which made it unnecessary to dwell on the subject at any length. The hon. Gentleman who had moved the rejection of the Bill had done so principally on the ground that the 3rd and 4th clauses, which were, of course, novel but important clauses, did not sufficiently raise a case for extraordinary action on the part of the law, and did not sufficiently guard the public against the action of the police. These clauses were intended especially to enable the police to act upon an extraordinary and exceptional state of feeling as to the condition of any streets and places of public resort, which were frequented by large numbers of men and women for the purpose already described, and they were proposed for the purpose of doing away with the difficulty of abating this nuisance. That the nuisance was a great one, everyone who passed through our streets and thoroughfares at night knew; but at present the police could not grapple with it, as they were unable to interfere without an act of solicitation having taken place, and the person who had been solicited being willing to undergo all the annoyance of appearing as a prosecutor. It was because of that difficulty that our law was powerless to deal with this public scandal. Under the Bill, in a case where a thoroughfare was habitually resorted to by numbers of persons for purposes of immorality, a certain number of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood would be able to go to the police and say—"The state of such and such a street or such and such a neighbourhood is a nuisance, and we call on you, in the cause of decency, to prevent the nuisance." In this way the condition of the street or neighbourhood in question would be brought more directly under the supervision of the police, and if they found men and women loitering about there apparently for immoral purposes, they would have authority to apprehend them, and to initiate an inquiry into their conduct. Of course, it would be necessary for evidence to be given of the act of loitering or immorality. He could not see why, that being the case, it should be more difficult to prove a case of immorality or loitering under these two clauses, than it was in ordinary cases of vagrancy to prove loitering for unlawful purposes. The only extraordinary part of the provisions of the Bill were those which gave the same powers to the police to act, when requested by residents in the neighbourhood affected, for the abatement of this nuisance that they now had under the Vagrant Acts for the prevention of vagrancy. Though they were all more or less alive, of course, to the dangers of the system known as blackmailing, still he thought that the Bill was one of great value, and that it was worth while risking something to gain much.

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) said, he did not wish to detain the House; but he desired to say that it appeared to him that this was a measure introduced into the House purely on the assumption that they could make people moral by Act of Parliament. He must say he greatly regretted seeing a measure of this kind introduced from that (the Opposition) side of the House, where one would expect to find protection for what was known as liberty of the subject. There were several important clauses of the Bill which provided against what was termed resorting in a public street or thoroughfare for immoral purposes. Well, was it possible to define in any Act of Parliament the words "immoral purposes?" He would not yield to anyone in deploring the shameful state of things which was to be witnessed in the streets of our Metropolis and large cities; but he contended that there was no more mischievous assumption than to suppose that they could make people better or protect them from inherent evils by the action of the police. What might be perfectly harmless to some, in others would lead to immorality. Hon. Gentlemen could scarcely be aware of the thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of persons who went out on Sundays and other occasions, sometimes for walks in the public parks and other places of resort which were to be found in all large cities. Many of these people might pass down the thoroughfares of which complaint was made to the police, merely for the sake of taking a harmless walk, and yet their conduct might give offence to some people. It was conceivable that a dozen ratepayers might have some spite or personal feeling against some particular individual and might set the police against them, and the provisions of the Bill might in many ways lead to the establishment of systems of espionage and blackmailing, the extent of the evil of which it would be impossible to conceive as affecting our social system. He believed with the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Stuart) that the real remedy for the evil lay deeper than such legislation as this. It was, no doubt, a great misfortune that this evil should exist; but it was quite impossible, and an entirely wrong assumption which no reasonable person would venture to make, to suppose that they could by Act of Parliament put a stop to the evil practice against which this Bill was directed.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, that the phrase they had just heard—that was to say, that they could not make people moral by Act of Parliament, was not warranted—he did not think it would bear examination—in connection with this Bill. They could undoubtedly make people more moral by removing temptation from the paths of the young and inexperienced. Under the existing law, annoyance in the streets might be proved individually; but look at the inconvenience and worry and expense, and perhaps even loss of character, which might be involved in the attempt to prove such annoyance. Difficulties beset the path of everyone who attempted to prove an individual grievance of that kind. But under this Bill, if it were passed, the police, set in motion by the ratepayers, would have power to disperse the crowds who constituted the evil, and in that way remove temptation—and very great temptation—from the path of the young. The Bill recognized the principle that a concourse of persons for an immoral purpose was a nuisance. He wished to say one word about the police. He knew it had become rather the fashion for certain Members in the House to abuse the police; but, for his own part, he did not think that the charge brought against their action in reference to this particular class of offence by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) was proved at all. He thought the hon. Member had founded his case upon very weak evidence indeed; and he believed that the investigation which had taken place had exonerated the police from all suspicion. The police might be fairly trusted to carry out the provisions of a Bill of this kind; because, after all, all that was to be done was to bring evidence before the tribunals of the country, which would try persons charged with offences under the Bill by the ordinary processes of law.

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington) said, he thought the suggestion made by the hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill, that he was willing to eliminate the Metropolis from the measure, showed the object he had in view. It was really to protect the health of our soldiers and sailors. He (Mr. T. Fry) hoped the House would pause before it consented to read the Bill a second time, for it was nothing but an attempt to re-introduce, by the thin end of the wedge, the repealed Contagious Diseases Acts for the protection of the health of our soldiers and sailors. They all deplored, as much as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) the condition of the streets of the Metropolis; and if a Bill of this kind was likely to be of any use at all anywhere, it would be in the Metropolis, which, however, the Mover said he was ready to eliminate, if necessary. If the police exercised the powers they at present possessed, they would be able to do all that was requisite to clear the streets.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, the Bill seemed to be the outcome of a delusion which appeared to exist in some minds. It was an attempt to combine two impossible conditions. It was an attempt to combine the outward decency of the streets of Paris with the absence of State-regulated vice which existed in that City. To do that was impossible. If they had a State-regulated system of vice, they would have decent streets, as in Paris; but if they had no State-regulated system of vice, they would see the condition of things which was now to be observed in the streets of London, and which every right-thinking man must desire to see abolished. What was the essence of this Bill? Why, to dispense with the necessity of proving annoyance—a thing which an hon. Member near him (Dr. Farquharson) regarded as its great merit. That hon. Member said, look at the worry, the expense, and possible loss of character which were involved in proving annoyance. Well, he (Mr. Pickersgill) was sorry to see his hon. Friend take up that position. He had thought—if he might be allowed to put it so—that his hon. Friend was a more strongly vertebrated animal than the position he had taken up seemed to show him to be; because the Bill was an indication of a tendency which, he was afraid, was rapidly growing amongst them—a tendency to get the police to do everything for them, instead of leaving the citizens to do something for themselves. It was because he saw in the Bill the mark of that tendency that he, for his part, was strongly opposed to it, and hoped the House would reject it.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he must say that this was one of those occasions on which the House was entitled to look for guidance from the Government Bench. It seemed to him quite impossible that anyone could, with a clear opinion, or even a clear conscience, vote for an extension of the powers of the police, unless the Minister who was responsible for law and order in this country stated that the present powers were insufficient to keep up a certain average and reasonable propriety in our streets. He (Sir George Trevelyan) was certainly very much struck by the arguments which had been put forward as a reason for hesitating to agree to the Bill; and he should imagine that it would be almost impossible for the great bulk of Members of the House to acquiesce in a Bill giving such serious powers of interference with private action, unless the Minister who knew most about the state of our streets and the powers that already existed for keeping order, stated that the powers already possessed by the police were wholly inadequate. He (Sir George Trevelyan) rose, not as a Member of the House who had any special knowledge—he might even say any special opinion—on the subject of the Bill; he rose as a Member of the House who wished to be informed; and he asked the Government, and especially the Home Secretary, to say whether he thought that this Bill for extending the powers of the police was necessary?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, that but for the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, he should not have taken part in this debate. No man, he supposed, could live in one of our large towns without feeling ashamed of the condition of the streets at night. This country was the most moral country in Europe, though the streets of our towns presented an unfavourable contrast to those of Continental cities. One cause of this was undoubtedly the spirit of liberty which would not tolerate the police interference, which preserved in Paris an outward decorum by no means answering to the real state of morals. He did not think the law as it stood was insufficient. The two Acts of Parliament—the Metropolitan Police Act and the Towns Police Clauses Act—gave ample powers for dealing with the difficulty, and it was by no means necessary, in order that the law should be enforced, that application should be made by a person actually solicited. A tradesman who was habitually annoyed by a prostitute haunting his premises or frequenting, for the purposes of her trade, the pavement in front of his premises, could put the law in motion. The hon. Gentlemen the Mover and Seconder of the Bill had taken different lines, as the Mover disclaimed any desire to deal with London, and the Seconder referred to nothing but London.

Mr. C. T. DYKE ACLAND said, that he expressed no unwillingness to extend the Bill to London, but stated that London was too large a subject to be dealt with by a private Member. His main object was the garrison towns.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, there was no reason to believe that the existing law was not sufficient for the garrison towns. No doubt the police would have to take action under the existing law, and there could be no doubt that some Members of the House were answerable for attempts to discourage the police from taking measures. Under the Metropolitan Act he was fortified in his view by the almost unanimous opinion of the police magistrates—persons resident at Highgate, for example, might compel a prosecution of persons guilty of an offence under the present law committed in Regent Street or anywhere in the Metropolitan Police District. Any 12 persons in the Metropolitan area might under the Bill put the police in motion, who would thereupon be bound to prosecute any person frequenting or resorting to a place where numerous persons resorted for immoral purposes, and on a second conviction the offenders might be flogged. Of course, that was a very great draconic and stringent clause which could hardly be worked out well in practice, and he hoped hon. Members would cease to trouble him with questions about the action of the police if an enactment of the kind were passed. He trusted that that sort of remedy would not be regarded by the House as the best and wisest for its purpose. He felt the very great danger there would be in exposing a force like the Metropolitan Police, composed of necessity of many men of indifferent culture and poor education, and not very highly paid, to the temptations which must inevitably accompany their coming into contact with the class of persons in question; and he thought that to expose them to it would be very undesirable. He sympathized largely with the object of the hon. Member who introduced that matter, and he recognized the honesty and frankness of the attempt made by the hon. Gentleman to deal with what was unquestionably a great social evil; but he gravely doubted whether those clauses would either be useful or adequate to cope with that evil.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he thought it would be almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, himself an acute lawyer, and also the Minister responsible in an especial degree for the administration of the police law in London. The right hon. Gentleman had laid it down that that was a great evil and a grave scandal, and that there was no doubt of its existence. Nobody, he supposed, would deny that the state of the streets of London was a disgrace to the Metropolis, or that the evil was one which it was worthy of the House to attempt to put down. As an hon. Member had intimated, the evil caused great temptation to young persons at a critical period of life. But the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had fully admitted the existence of that great evil, and that it was not necessary in those cases to prove annoyance to a particular person who had been solicited. He understood him to say that the law could be put in force by any ratepayer or householder living in the locality that complained of the evil and also by the police who represented the public in that matter. The right hon. Gentleman had also laid it down that it was the business and the duty of the police to endeavour to remedy the evil. That had not hitherto been the prevailing rule in the administration of the law in London; but as the right hon. Gentleman said that if the scandal could be abated by the police it was their duty to do so, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Acland) might be content with that statement and call upon the right hon. Gentleman to carry out what

he had intimated that night. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was sure that nobody on his side desired draconic legislation or espionage, or to make people moral by Act of Parliament; but they desired to prevent people from being made immoral by maladministration or the neglect to administer the existing law. The whole question was now placed on a different platform; they knew where the power rested and who was responsible if the law was not put in force. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that a midnight meeting was not promotive of purity; but it had long been the custom with a large body of Nonconformists, and also with many English Churchmen, to hold on the last night of the year religious services, which closed shortly after midnight; and it was a disgrace to London that decent men and women on going out from religious service at Piccadilly should have been exposed to the annoyance which an hon. Member had described. He hoped that the House had that evening taken one step towards clearing the streets of London from disgrace.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had intimated that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had in his speech that night taken a new view of the law. Now, for himself he believed the law had not been carried out outside the City of London, but the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary was the view of the law on which he had acted while he was at the Mansion House when persons were brought up on the charge of solicitation, and which was taken by other City magistrates. He trusted that the result of that debate would be to induce Metropolitan magistrates to be more strict in carrying out the law.

Mr. C. T. DYKE ACLAND said, that after the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary as to what was the present state of the law, he would move that the Order for the Second Reading of the Bill be discharged.

Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (BELFAST) BILL.—[Bill 138.]

(*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Fenwick.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he regretted to be obliged to occupy the time of the House in referring to the most unsatisfactory and anomalous condition of things produced by the Act of last Session extending the municipal franchise of Belfast. By that Act a portion of the clause of the original Act had been repealed, leaving that part of it still in force which provided for personal rating; the effect of this was to withhold the franchise from all occupiers of premises rated at £4 and under, and only to admit those who occupied premises valued above £4 to the privilege of the franchise. He opposed an arbitrary line being drawn at £4, and the effect of the Bill which he now proposed should be read a second time was to confer the franchise upon all household occupiers. The present polling machinery was very imperfect, and, as an example of that, he might mention that in one of the large wards of Belfast, where there were 7,000 electors, there was only one polling place, which necessitated working men travelling a distance of two miles in order to record their votes. The Bill provided that the same polling accommodation should be given as was found necessary for Parliamentary purposes. The Bill also provided that the Parliamentary and municipal revision should take place at one Court, and that there should be one Court for both, and that the Revising Barristers would have power to deal with both lists together, of course having a separate list of women householders, who, by the recent Act, were entitled to the municipal franchise, separately dealt with. This would result in a considerable saving of public expenditure. As the passing of this Bill was essential to make the one recently dealt with workable, he hoped the House would show its confidence in the working classes of the great constituency he had the honour to represent by accepting its provisions. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. De Cobain.*)

Sir JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid) said, he feared that the hon. Member did not quite understand the difference between the Parliamentary and the municipal franchise. The effect of the Bill of last year was to raise the municipal franchise of Belfast from 6,000 to 26,000, and no objection had been taken to the Bill of last year except by the hon. Member himself. The fact was that the Parliamentary franchise included £10 rated occupiers, while the municipal franchise did not. The Parliamentary franchise included those who occupied part of a dwelling house, while this municipal franchise did not. The municipal franchise required personal rating, which the proposed Bill did not. As the question was settled last year, he thought it was too bad that the House should be asked again so soon to deal with it. He therefore had no alternative but to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words, "upon this day six months."—(*Sir James Corry.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, he hoped the House would agree to read the Bill a second time. Both franchises were exceedingly wide, but not identical, with the result that there were, as had been stated, two revisions required for the Parliamentary and the municipal list of voters. That caused very heavy expense not only to the ratepayers as a body, but also very heavy expense to the political Parties who had to watch the registrations. It seemed to him a great anomaly that a man might have a vote for borough purposes, and that the same person might not have a vote for municipal purposes. The Party to which the hon. Gentleman who moved the second reading belonged would, he believed, gain much more than the Nationalist Party if the House passed the Bill; but, notwithstanding that, he thought it very desirable that the franchise should be extended as far as possible. The only objection he had to the Bill was that it only applied to one borough—namely, the Borough of Belfast. He would be much better pleased if the Bill could be extended to the other municipal boroughs in Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had defended the Bill, on the grounds that it would be a great convenience to have one list for Parliamentary and municipal elections; but even that object would not be attained by the present Bill, because there would still be a women householders' list required in addition. There would be two lists at any rate. But further, his hon. Friend who moved the second reading (Mr. De Cobain) was aware that in the existing Parliamentary franchise there was what was known as the "service franchise." It was not very clear from the Bill whether the hon. Member intended to include the service franchise in the municipal franchise or not. If he did not, the object which the hon. Gentleman desired to obtain—namely, that of having one list of voters for the two elections—would not be obtained. If the hon. Gentleman did mean to give the service franchise for municipal purposes, he (the Chief Secretary) must point out that they would be introducing into local government a franchise which was wholly divorced from the payment of rates. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had introduced a Local Government Bill on a very wide basis indeed, but its franchise was a rating franchise, as in his opinion every franchise for local purposes ought to be. His hon. Friend now wished to go further than that, and to introduce a system which he (Mr. Balfour) thought they ought never to accept—one which would hand over to persons who did not contribute directly or indirectly to local expenditure, the management of local affairs. That was a principle which had never yet been sanctioned by the House, and he hoped it never would be, because it would certainly lead to gross extravagance and propably to gross mismanagement. That was not the time, and neither did he wish, to enter upon a lengthy discussion as to the principle which should regulate the franchise in local affairs, but he

based his opposition on the opinion of every responsible statesman and of every responsible Party in that House—namely, that contribution to local rates should be a condition to the exercising of the local franchise, and on that ground he concurred with the Motion of his hon. Friend behind him (Sir James Corry). He also agreed with what the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Biggar) had said, that if they were going to alter the municipal franchise they should apply such a measure to the whole of Ireland. The municipal franchise of Belfast was altered last year, and the Bill applied to Belfast only because it was associated with another Bill to deal with a very large question of local expenditure. He was not going to say that that was not a sufficient excuse; but no excuse of the kind now existed. He would impress upon the House the extreme inexpediency of dealing with such a question of local government for Ireland by a Bill that applied to only one town in Ireland, and for that reason as well as for the others he had stated, he hoped his hon. Friend would not think it necessary to press the Bill on the house at that particular juncture.

MR. DE COBAIN said, that the question of the service franchise could be dealt with in Committee.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he quite sympathized with the hon. Member who introduced the Bill; but to give every lodger on the Parliamentary list the right to vote at municipal elections, was a principle he could not accept. If the hon. Member (Mr. De Cobain) had estranged many Members on that side of the House who otherwise sympathized with him, he must only blame himself for the careless drawing of his Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 80; Noes 162: Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 64.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

WAGES (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 139.]
(*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Howell.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) said, the Bill he had now the honour to move provided for the weekly payment of wages to workmen in Ireland. It was in the recollection of hon. Members that last year, when the Truck Bill, introduced by the hon Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), was under discussion, an Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) providing for the payment of wages weekly was carried by a large majority, but it did not ultimately find a place in the Act. This Bill carried out the object of that Amendment, with the exception of making it optional with the employer to give 75 per cent of the wages due to the workmen for piece work on the alternate week, and to hold over the final settlement for a fortnight. He trusted the alternative he had introduced would meet the difficulties raised by the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) to the principle of weekly payment of wages when it was raised last year. He hoped hon. Members would recognize the claims of the working classes upon the sympathy of the Legislature. The hon. Member for Falkirk (Mr. Sinclair), who had given Notice that he would move the rejection of the Bill, objected to the restricted operation of the measure. If the Bill were allowed to go into Committee, he (Mr. De Cobain) would have no objection to the principle being extended to all parts of the United Kingdom. If the weekly payment of wages would enable the working class to spend with greater economy the money which they earned with so much hard toil, the House ought not to hesitate to agree to the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. De Cobain.*)

Sir JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid) said, it fell to his lot to oppose the hon. Member upon this Bill also, and he begged to move that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months. The question of weekly payment of wages was thoroughly discussed last year upon the Truck Bill, brought in by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). The fact was that this Bill was aimed at one particular firm in Belfast, a firm which had done more for the prosperity of Belfast than any other firm, because there happened to be last year a strike in reference to this very point. The strike was soon settled, and the workmen were perfectly satisfied they were wrong in asking for the weekly payment of wages. It was stated last year that in some of the Clyde shipbuilding yards, wages were paid weekly; but, as a matter of fact, in the majority of the Clyde yards wages were paid fortnightly. It was certainly very unreasonable that the principle of the weekly payment of wages should be extended to Ireland only. Personally, he was in favour of paying wages weekly, and he very strongly objected to Ireland being singled out as the field for the operation of such a Bill as this.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir James Corry.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, that if the hon. Baronet (Sir James Corry) was in favour of the weekly payment of wages, he had a very queer way of showing it. This Bill suggested a sensible and rational and radical, though not revolutionary, arrangement in the payment of wages. Much was said about the necessity of improving the condition of the working man. In his (Mr. E. Harrington's) opinion, the first best thing to do was to give the working man some chance of feeling his own power. One way to do that was to provide that a workman should, at the end of a week, be able to draw the wages he had earned during the week, and thus be able to meet the liabilities which he had, by the very necessities of his existence, incurred. At present they made the working man dependent upon others. If the hon. Baronet was sincere in his professions, he ought to vote for the second reading of the Bill. The 2nd clause provided that—

> "Where the engagement is not by time, but for piece work, it shall be lawful for the workman if not paid weekly to claim in each alternate week at least 75 per cent of the wages earned and a settlement in full every fortnight of the amount due for wages."

As a matter of fact, if business arrangements would permit of it, a working man was entitled to his wages each evening. As a rule, however, a certain hour was set apart weekly for the payment of wages. They would never recognize fully the justice of the working man's claim until they gave him the absolute right to draw at the end of a week his week's earnings. That was not an exorbitant claim. There was nothing in this claim that would upset the Constitution. It might be said it was better for the working man that the payment of his wages should be delayed; that he should be paid at the end of a month, or at the end of a quarter. How would the working man live under such circumstances? He lived from hand to mouth, and, if paid weekly, he of necessity was a week in debt. If paid monthly, he would be a month in debt; if paid quarterly, he would be a quarter in debt. The longer they delayed the payment of his wages, the more injury they would do him. The hon. Baronet said that this was a measure directed at one firm in Ireland only, and that that firm had done much for Belfast. He (Mr. Edward Harrington) willingly acknowledged that the shipbuilding firm of Harland and Wolff was a credit to Ireland. He wished that in the South of Ireland they could boast of a similar firm; and he denied that, so far as he was concerned, in the remarks he was addressing to the House there was any spirit of animus towards any one firm in Ireland. But if one firm took a different view from the community at large, it might be assumed that that firm was wrong. As to the principle of paying a working man at the end of a week the wages he had earned in the week, there ought to be no question. If one of the *protégés* of any of the hon. Members opposite held a Government contract, and tomorrow he represented to the Department through whom he did the work that he had done so much work, he would be entitled to 75 per cent of the earned money. Would they allow a working man to draw at the end of the week 75 per cent of his earnings? He left this practical question to the consciences of hon. Members.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he hoped the House would consent to read the Bill a second time. It was within the recollection of the House that the principle of this Bill was fully discussed last Session, on an Amendment moved by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) to the Truck Bill. He should not, therefore, take up the time of the House by any lengthened remarks on the subject now. The objection taken to the Bill by the hon. Baronet (Sir James Corry) was that it was not to be applicable to all trades in all parts of the United Kingdom. But the hon. Gentleman who was in charge of the Bill was quite prepared in Committee to extend the principle to the United Kingdom generally. It would be readily admitted, on both sides of the House, that those who were most competent to speak on this question were the workmen themselves, and at the Trades Union Congress at Swansea, at which every trade in the United Kingdom was represented, a resolution in favour of the principle of the weekly payment of wages was passed unanimously. Surely the time had come that working men should be able to claim at the end of the week the wages they had earned. In all large factories and workshops wages were paid weekly, and he believed he spoke accurately when he said that at some collieries wages were also paid weekly. No valid reason could be given against the principle; and, therefore, he hoped hon. Members would agree to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. De Cobain) who moved the second reading of the Bill said he was prepared in Committee to agree to an Amendment extending the principle of the measure to the Three Kingdoms. It was a pity the hon. Gentleman had allowed the Bill to be drafted in its present form. This was the second Bill the hon. Gentleman had had charge of that night. The last Bill was largely lost through bad drafting, and he suspected this Bill would be lost for a like reason. This was simply an attempt to carry into legislative effect the Amendment that was proposed last year by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). That Amendment merely applied to Ireland. In the first instance it was carried; but, ultimately, it was not retained in the Truck Bill of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh).

Mr. DE COBAIN said, the Amendment was carried by a large majority, but was struck out in the House of Lords.

Mr. SINCLAIR said, the Amendment was passed in the first instance, but ultimately it was not pressed.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that as he had charge of the Truck Bill, he might be allowed to say that the Amendment was carried in this House by a large majority, struck out in the House of Lords, renewed here, and carried unanimously.

Mr. SINCLAIR said, the statement of the hon. Member (Mr. Bradlaugh) did not in the least differ from what he meant to convey. What he meant to convey was that when the Amendment was struck out by the House of Lords, there was no insistance in the attempt made to make it part of the law of the land. This Bill was an attempt, as he had said, to give legislative effect to that Amendment. He opposed the Amendment last year, and he opposed it now, on the ground, and on this ground only, that it was sought to apply the principle of weekly payment of wages to one town, and, practically, to one industry in the United Kingdom only. If a Bill was brought in to provide for weekly payment of wages in ship building yards generally —and it was only in the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Harland and Wolff that this Bill was intended to operate—he would vote for it; but he would not vote for a Bill which would compel the compulsory payment of wages weekly in one shipbuilding yard only. It would not be at all fair to introduce piecemeal legislation of this kind, and whilst he had always been in favour of payment of wages weekly, he was not in favour of it in one trade in one town.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he considered that this was a very retrograde measure. The working classes were quite able to settle themselves how they would have their wages paid. They did not want to make the working classes more dependent upon the House of Commons than they were at present. To interfere with men who were able in all affairs to look after their interests in the best possible manner seemed altogether wrong in principle. Payment of wages weekly was almost universal. Where it did not prevail, there was generally some reason why it should not be so which was understood by both employers and employed.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, he hoped the Government would support the Bill. In Her Majesty's Dockyards wages were paid every week on Fridays, and nothing conduced more to sobriety, industry, and regularity than such a system. In one of Her Majesty's Dockyards he had seen upwards of 4,000 men paid their weekly wages in half an hour. Some of these men had been working on piece work; some at a rate per hour, working many hours of overtime to meet emergencies; while others were paid by the day. There could be no difficulty or inconvenience in carrying out an arrangement which so greatly promoted the welfare of the working classes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) said, the hon. Gentleman (Sir John Swinburne) appeared to think that the mere preference of the Government and of Members of the House for one particular method of paying wages was a good reason for giving legislative sanction to that system, and making its adoption obligatory upon every employer of labour. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was unwilling to put himself in opposition, for a second time, to his hon. Friend the Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain), but he thought there were one or two very obvious considerations which had been more or less fairly put before the House in the course of the debate, which ought to make any hon. Member hesitate before he supported this Bill. Everyone would admit that unnecessary interference between workmen and employer was to be deprecated. They had a great example of interference in the case of the Truck Acts, but the Truck Acts were intended to stop fraud. There was no pretence that there was any fraud committed by employers on the workmen when they paid them fortnightly, any more than when they paid them weekly. If the House agreed, and he thought they did, that unnecessary interference was to be avoided, he asked them also to accept a second proposition, which was that if interference of any kind was to be attempted, it should only be attempted after very careful inquiry into the case made out by the workmen on the one side, and by the employers on the other side. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck

Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick) told the House that the workmen at the Trades Union Congress at Swansea were unanimous in favour of wages being paid weekly; but the House did not know the grounds on which the decision was arrived at and what the employers had to urge against the views which hon. Gentlemen supported. Then if these two propositions were accepted, there was a third proposition which he asked the House to accept also, which was, that if they were going to interfere between workmen and employers in matters not connected with fraud, and in matters in which they might suppose workmen were perfectly able to protect themselves, the interference should be general in its character, equally applied to every industry, and to every part of the United Kingdom. It was obvious on the face of the Bill that the interference here proposed was not general in its character, but confined to Ireland, and it was a matter of notoriety, though not obvious on the face of the Bill, that this particular provision was directed by his hon. Friend against one particular firm in Belfast.

Mr. DE COBAIN said, that the statement was made last year, and he had heard it with great regret, indeed, that this Amendment of the Truck Acts was directed against one firm. That statement was made by a local gentleman, who must have been aware of the fact that it was entirely incorrect. There were three shipbuilding firms in Belfast. Besides that, the principle of fortnightly payments was extended to other industries, so this Bill was not aimed at one firm.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was not aware whether the Bill was or was not directed against one firm; but it was on the confession of the hon. Gentleman directed against one particular industry in one particular town. It would be admitted that interference between employers and their servants, in the matter of a contract which was binding, was a principle which the House ought not to accept without full inquiry into the matter. He presumed that some advantage was to be gained by the shipbuilders in Belfast adopting the system of fortnightly payment, in competition with their rivals in the same trade in other parts of the Kingdom. There was no industry in which competition had been keener than in that of shipbuilding. Over production had taken place in that as well as in other industries, and there had been the closest competition between shipbuilding on the Clyde, the Thames, and at Belfast, and nothing could be more unfair, in the first place, to the employer, and, in the second place, to the employed, than to say to one particular manufacturer, "You shall not pay your men fortnightly," while you allow their competitors in London and elsewhere to pay their men as they pleased. He earnestly pressed the House not to pass a Bill aimed against a particular set of firms in a particular town, until steps had been taken to inquire into the whole subject and an effort made to find out whether or not it was to the interest of the working classes of the country that it should be obligatory on employers to pay men by the week. If the result of that investigation should be that such interference with private contract was desirable, it would then be necessary to introduce a Bill applicable to every part of the United Kingdom and to every industry.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, the right hon. Gentleman had spoken as if he had forgotten that the House had on two occasions by a large majority sanctioned the principle of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of interference between the employer and the employed; but he (Mr. Gill) would like to know what interference was provided for in this Bill, which was simply to enable workmen to claim payment for work and labour done. How that could be considered as interference in the sense spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman he was at a loss to understand. The question was, whether or not the workman having done his work was entitled to his wages, and all that the Bill did was to guarantee this right. The right hon. Gentleman and other hon. Members said that the employer derived some advantage from the existing practice. Of course he did, or he would not insist upon it; but were they to consider the advantage of the employer alone? The workman claimed to have a certain advantage in being paid weekly, and he (Mr. Gill) said that he had a right to be considered, and that his right to payment weekly could not be disputed. These men who were living from hand to mouth were in debt to the shopkeepers, under the present system, and by refusing them their wages weekly they were defrauded by their employers to the extent of a week's wages.

Sir WILLIAM EWART (Belfast, N.) said, as one of the Members for Belfast it was his duty to say a few words on the Bill. It was very true, as the hon. Member opposite said, that the Bill could be extended in Committee; but the question was too large, in his opinion, to be settled in that manner. The hon. Member had made out for the Bill no case whatever. The Bill was not demanded by the people of Ireland; it was erroneously believed that it was aimed alone at shipbuilding yards, and he thought the House would hesitate long before it established an anomaly such as that which would be created by it. It would create confusion throughout the whole country by making it imperative that wages should be paid weekly.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, that although the Bill referred to Ireland, it contained a principle which, if it were sanctioned by the House of Commons, would very soon spread across the water to Great Britain.

Mr. BUCHANAN rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 174; Noes 68: Majority 106.—(Div. List, No. 65.)

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 96; Noes 143: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 66.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *put off* for six months.

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

Resolutions [April 9] *reported.*

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when it was proposed to bring the Cart Wheel Tax into operation, and also when the duty on the new issue of capital by Companies would come into operation? Would these come into operation on the confirmation of the Resolution in Committee of Ways and Means, or not until the Budget Bill was passed?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, the Licence Duties on horses and carts would come into operation on the 1st of January next year with other licence duties. He was extremely anxious to make good progress with the Budget Bill, so that the Revenue might, without delay, have the advantage of dealing with the new issues of capital by Companies. He understood that Companies were now issuing their capital as fast as possible, in order to escape taxation; and he hoped he would receive the support of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends in the effort to pass the Bill through the House as soon as possible.

Resolutions *agreed to.*

Ordered, That a Bill be brought in upon the Seventh Resolution, and that Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson do prepare and bring it in.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 27th day of March, and then agreed to by the House, That they do make provision therein pursuant to the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Resolutions.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 202.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 11*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered — First Reading*—Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment (No. 2) * [203].

Second Reading—Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief [5], *put off.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS (IRELAND) RELIEF BILL.—[Bill 5.]

(*Mr. Blane, Mr. Biggar, Mr. McCartan, Mr. Chance, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that in so doing he would draw attention to the necessity of dealing with the present state of the agricultural interest in Ireland. Last year the Government found it necessary to admit 150,000 leaseholders in Ireland to the benefits of the Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1881. That Act enabled them to enter the Court and get a fair rent fixed, but there were still a number of tenants, although not quite so large a number, who were deprived or excluded from the advantages of the Acts of 1881 and 1887—namely, the holders of *toties quoties* and perpetuity leases, and these were deprived of the benefit of having a fair rent fixed by the Land Act. It seemed to him that it was because Trinity College, Dublin, returned two Members to the House that there was a political reason for excluding the perpetuity leaseholder from the benefits of the Bill. Trinity College, Dublin, had a large number of these perpetuity leaseholders, and these men were deprived of all right to enter the Land Court and have a fair rent fixed. The Trinity College tenants offered a fair example of the tenants they sought to bring within the scope of the Bill so as to supplement the measure of last year. The Trinity College Leasing Act of 1851 provided for the revision of rents every 10 years on the basis of the rise or fall in the prices of the staples of agricultural produce—wheat, oats, potatoes, pork, cream, and butter; but the rent of all those farms to 1861, to 1871, and to 1881, had been increased with never-failing regularity. If the tenants failed to pay exorbitant rents they were sent out to the roadside most remorselessly. The clause with reference to the rise or fall of prices had never lessened, but had always raised rents so far as Trinity College was concerned. They intended by this Bill to put an end to such injustice, and to enable the tenants to enter the Court and to get a fair rent fixed. It would be impossible, if this Bill were passed, for Trinity College to act towards its tenants as it had done. Trinity College might be taken as an example of the close co-operation of landlords. It was an Institution that Lord Ashbourne—whose partizanship in this matter had been complained of—boasted in "another place" had his entire sympathy, and he presumed he included also the injustice from which these tenants suffered. Those below the Gangway who promoted the Bill were not only anxious that it should apply to Ireland, but they would be ready to see it made applicable to England and Scotland. They did not claim any privilege for the people of Ireland that they were not willing to see extended to the people of Scotland and Scotland. They did not stand alone in condemning the position of the unfortunate leaseholders, for Lord Leitrim, in the Upper House, said that he had a proposal of his own. His Lordship was not much of a Radical; he was a landlord, and belonged to the race of landlords. He proposed to insert a clause in the Land Bill of 1887 dealing with perpetuity leases, which the partizanship of Lord Ashbourne had excluded. The present Bill proposed to remedy the grievance under which the perpetuity leaseholders suffered. Another noble Lord also complained of the exclusion of these leaseholders. Lord Ventry called it a great hardship, and pointed out that these perpetuity leases were not taken by the people from free choice, but were forced on them at a time when they had no choice. The tenants were, in fact, told that they must either take the leases or go. The action of the House had in former times destroyed the woollen and other industries of Ireland, so that the tenants had no choice, and they had to accept these leases or perish. They were compelled to accept these leases from Trinity College; but it was a poor alternative. The promoters of this Bill contended that the Government, having last year admitted 150,000 leaseholders of 99 years and more to the benefits of the Land Act, they should go the full length, and admit all leaseholders. If the country was in favour of setting up a tribunal for settling fair rents between landlords and tenants, what reason was there for the exclusion of these men? There might have been an argument against it before the passing of the Land Act of 1887, because it might be urged that in this case there was a signed contract. But now even a Conservative Government had voided signed contracts. The fact was that the signed contracts were preserved by the Liberals, and in that respect they were more Conservative than the Conservatives. If the Conservative Government admitted leaseholders in their Act, why, then, did they stop at leases for 99 years? Other leases besides those had been forced on the tenants, and if they did not take them they were driven on to the roadside to perish. Lord Herschell, in the other House, said there was a manifest grievance in this case, and that it required a remedy; and he complained that the leaseholders who now sought to be enfranchised by allowing them to enter the Land Court were excluded. If Lord Herschell's advice had been taken, these proposals would have been included in the Act of last year, and there would have been none of the notices of evictions they now heard of. In this Bill they were merely copying the Scotch Crofters' Act; and if it had been passed the Court would have been able to compound for arrears, and a great deal better feeling would have been the result. With regard to the question of turbary, there were a great many landlords, and some of them were known in the House, who were notorious for their treatment of their tenants. When the Land Commission had from time to time adjusted the rents between landlords and tenants, the landlords had kept the right of cutting firing from the poor people, thereby leaving them to perish amid snow and ice in the depth of winter. They proposed to act generously by the landlords in the Bill, for they proposed to give the Land Court power to settle what rent should be paid for turbary. That proposal prevented the Government from saying that they proposed to defraud anyone, or to take from anybody his just rights and due. In enabling the Court to compound arrears on any agricultural holding they only copied that portion of the Scotch Act that was at the present moment the law of Scotland. The Bill had not been long printed, but it was not a new one. It was not before the House for the first time. It had, in fact, been before the House several times in principle, and its promoters had been guilty of a little piracy where it was thought necessary. They were not so bigoted as to refuse to take anything in the way of a hint from their political opponents, and accordingly they had copied from them where it was thought just and right to do so. Those who supported the passing of the Bill for compounding arrears in Scotland could not resist the extension of the measure to Ireland. The Irish Parliamentary Party was in favour of the plan, and some Unionist Members were in favour of it, so that there was very little division as far as Ireland was concerned with regard to the Bill. To those Unionists who said that the people of Ireland would have as fair a hearing in that Parliament, and that their grievances would be as swiftly remedied as they would be by an Irish Parliament, this Bill was put as a test. The promoters of it fairly and honestly put before them a measure of reform which was supported by the vast majority of the Representatives of Ireland. Of course, it would not be supported by the Representatives of close Corporations. That was a matter to be deplored. The Universities had never yet been in the van of reform, and never would. They had never been in the van in the matter of education, and never would. They were opposed by the Representatives of the Universities, just as the Bill of 1886 was destroyed by the advice of Trinity College. The Leaseholders' Defence Association of Ireland had by means of circulars and public meetings endeavoured to bring this question before the public and their Representatives in Parliament. On one occasion when the Association met in Dublin, the Lord Mayor in the chair, a letter was read which threw some light on the position of perpetuity leaseholders. The writer of the letter stated his own case as being one of exceptional hardship. He rented an agricultural holding on a 999 years' lease when the prices of all farm produce were at their highest—namely, in 1873. The present landlord, the Rev. William Lister, a Protestant rector in the county of Westmeath, would not, the tenant said, give him a penny of reduction, although for six years he had been losing £160 a-year. The landlord refused to have a fair rent adjusted this year, either by arbitration or by means of the Land Commission, telling the tenant that he had "made a bad bargain, and that he should hold him to it as long as the law allowed him." They proposed in this Bill that the law should no longer allow the landlord to do this, because he contended that the House could not with any show of justice give the benefits of the Act of 1881 to the 99 years' leaseholders and refuse them to the perpetuity leaseholders. He challenged the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) to show any difference in the right as a matter of justice. The hon. and learned Gentleman might defend the Institute with the ability that they all admitted he possessed, but he would be unable to show anything that could satisfy the House that these men should be excluded. It was not necessary to say much for the necessity of power being given for compounding arrears. At the present time there were 6,000 farmers in Ireland whose terms were running and would shortly expire. The notices were served last October, and, therefore, no fewer than 36,000 persons—allowing six to each family—would be affected by the evictions now about to take place. That was a very serious state of affairs, and one intimately connected with the defence and integrity of the Empire. Englishmen were jealous of the Empire, and they heard a great deal now-a-days about the integrity of the Empire; but in his judgment there was nothing more certain, if the present area of cultivation in the Three Kingdoms was constantly decreasing—for their readiness to supply themselves with food was one of their best, if not chief, defences—than that the integrity of the Empire would not be maintained. The main garrison of the Empire was not the naval or military force, but the civil population. At the present time 33 per cent of our imports of breadstuff came from abroad, from those countries which had been our enemies in the past, and who would undoubtedly, at some future time, be our enemies again. The present state of the Land Laws in Ireland, England, and Scotland tended to the area of cultivation becoming smaller and smaller, while our importations from abroad were getting larger. The result was that in a time of disturbance the garrison of the Empire would most likely be starved into subjection. It might be said that we depended on our Army and Navy; but he thought the best way was to have our supplies within our coast lines. This Bill would largely enable this result to be achieved, and therefore they claimed to be the best friends of the Empire. He remembered on one occasion assisting a sailor to desert from the American Navy. He found, however, that the sailor was not an American at all, but an American from Whitechapel. He asked the man what was the reason the United States had such a small Navy and England such a large one. The sailor replied that the United States did not require a large Navy because her supplies were within her own coast line. This man's observation indicated the strength of nations and the pith of their defence. Our legislation should tend as much as possible to keep the largest area in cultivation, and we should import as little of our breadstuffs from abroad as possible. The present Government could not care much about the integrity of the Empire if they failed to support the Bill. The Bill was not an extensive one, and had been drafted with all the moderation that characterized the Irish Parliamentary Party from which it emanated; and he was sure that it would commend itself to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland if he stood alone, and not in the very bad company of the Irish Tories who made him resist such measures as this. The Irish Parliamentary Party were imbued with a sense of their responsibility. They were animated by a desire to do the best they could for their fellow-countrymen, whose confidence they possessed, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would give fair consideration to this measure. He repeated that the measure was not a very advanced one—it was not so advanced as he should have liked; but, such as it was, he hoped that the House would fairly consider it, and if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would take what was good in it and give its promoters his assistance, the result would, he (Mr. Blane) believed, tend to the pacification of Ireland and to the lessening and relief of the burdens of the taxpayers of Great Britain. He therefore begged to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Blane.*)

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, the hon. Member (Mr. Blane) had not, he thought, in introducing the Bill, made out a case sufficiently strong to induce the House to accept it. This measure was an extremely strong measure. The only interesting statement made by the hon. Member was that in which he related an incident in his previous career; the hon. Gentleman told the House how he had assisted someone to evade the laws of the United Kingdom.

MR. BLANE: The United States.

MR. MACARTNEY begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon. At all events, the hon. Gentleman admitted having assisted somebody to break the laws of some country, a task which was probably not at all uncongenial or unpleasant to him. The hon. Gentleman had rested the principal portion of his statement upon the case of the Trinity College tenants. He (Mr. Macartney) very much doubted whether the clause in this Bill which was designed to relieve those tenants would have the effect of relieving them. He did not wish to make a definite statement upon the matter, because the position of those tenants was one of great technicality, but he very much doubted whether the clause in relation to those tenants would have the effect the hon. Gentleman desired. He might, perhaps, relieve the hon. Gentleman's anxiety in regard to the Trinity College tenants by telling him that those tenants had met, and had introduced into that House a Bill which embodied all their desires, and in which they had stated what relief they desired to obtain. That Bill, he hoped, would come up for second reading on some occasion during this Session, and then he trusted they would have the support of the hon. Member. He could not admit for a moment that the case of the Trinity College tenants was sufficient to satisfy the House that the Bill they were now considering was one which ought to receive a second reading. This Bill, which was called a Bill for the relief of agricultural tenants in Ireland, would be much better described as a Bill for the abolition of rent in Ireland. He admitted that it was the most honest agricultural measure that had come from the Benches opposite, because it went straight to the point at issue. That which divided hon. Members opposite from hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House was the contention of hon. Gentlemen opposite that no such thing as rent should exist in Ireland, and that the country would be much better if deprived of such a class of persons as landlords, and the Bill, if carried, would undoubtedly effect that object. He therefore imagined that the hon. Member would not be surprised if he (Mr. Macartney), having regard not only to the desires of his constituents, but to that sense of responsibility which the hon. Member denied to the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), refused to assent to the provisions of this measure. This Bill, not only in minor details, but in important principles, upset the settlement of 1881. It upset three of the principal provisions of the Land Act—namely, as regards sub-letting, the length of the judicial tenancy, and the status of the present and future tenants. He observed that the hon. Member did not think he had really a very strong case to make for, having dealt at some length with the Trinity College tenants who could not possibly benefit under the Bill, he glided over the other important provisions of the Bill, and went on to deal with the question of arrears and of turbary. Upon the question of arrears, which was now attracting a good deal of attention in Ireland, he (Mr. Macartney) desired to say that, as far as the landlord were concerned, the compounding of arrears or the dealing with them in instalments was not a question, in his opinion, of mere monetary benefit, but it was a question which they must regard with great interest and with great seriousness on account of its moral effect. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes; and it was not only regarded by the landlords from that point of view, but by the tenants who were not in arrear. He did not believe that at the present time there was any feeling stronger in Ireland than the feeling of objection to any other action in regard to the arrears of rent that was entertained by the tenants who for years past had been honestly paying their rents. Those tenants considered that if the House of Commons proceeded to give further encouragement to what they considered the idleness and inability to work their farms properly of their neighbours there would be no possibility in the future of the question of arrears being ever settled in Ireland. If this House proceeded now to deal, as the hon. Member (Mr. Blane) desired to deal, with arrears, it was impossible to suppose that any tenant in Ireland would consider it worth his while in the future to avoid getting into arrear. He had no hesitation in saying that 95 per cent of the tenants who would be benefited by the proposals of the hon. Member with regard to arrears would be tenants whose arrears had been wiped out since 1882 by the action of the House, and who since then had never attempted to avoid getting into arrear. Unfortunately, perhaps, both for the tenants and for the landlords, the landlords had not been sufficiently rigid in making the tenants pay their rents when due. He did not give that merely as his own opinion, but he had had a great many statistics sent to him on this question. He had received an account of a case in County Galway in which the judicial rent was fixed in in 1881, the arrears were wiped out in October, 1882, and since then the tenant had only paid one and a-half year's rent. Yet in the proposal of the hon. Member this tenant would be freed from his arrears which he had made but little attempt to prevent accumulating. He had another case which occurred in County Tyrone, in which no rent had been paid for the last four years, by a tenant whose arrears were wiped away in 1882. He had a case, also, from the neighbourhood of Edgeworthtown. His informant said that out of 27 tenants who were cleared on the 25th of March, 1881, under the Arrears Clause of the Land Act of 1881, all but one owed rent up to March, 1887. Fourteen owed two years' rent and upwards, seven owed four years' rent and upwards, and others owed rent in different proportions.

Mr. BLANE: Upon what property is that?

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he would hand to the hon. Gentleman the letters afterwards, if he chose to look at them.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.): What is the property in Galway?

Mr. MACARTNEY said, that when he had resumed his seat he would give the hon. Gentleman the papers he had relating to the case in Galway. His objection to dealing with arrears in the manner proposed by the hon. Member (Mr. Blane) was the great danger from his point of view, and from the point of view of the great majority of the tenants whom he represented, of the moral effect; it was an encouragement, they believed, to the tenants in Ireland not to be honest and saving, but to be lax in endeavouring to meet their legal engagements. Another point upon which the hon. Member for South Armagh relied in asking the House to agree to this Bill was a provision in it relating to turbary. He did not think the hon. Member made out a very strong case upon that point. He did not altogether object to the way in which the hon. Gentleman proposed to deal with the right of turbary; but he could not say that he relied very much on the hon. Gentleman's generosity, the generosity which he exhibited in the 17th clause of the Bill. He fancied that the hon. Gentleman himself did not imagine that that generosity would redound very much to the landlord's benefit. It was one of those gifts which he was afraid that they on the Ministerial side of the House must look upon with great suspicion. But he wished the House to consider how turbary was dealt with at the present moment by the Land Commission, or by most of the Sub-Commissioners. A landlord might deny when he came into Court that the tenant had any right of turbary, and if he proved that, a judicial rent was fixed altogether irrespective of the right of turbary, and the landlord and the tenant were left to settle the question of turbary outside as best they could. In the second place, the landlord might deny the right, but he might undertake to allow the tenant turbary during the period of the judicial rent. In the third place, the tenant might prove his right. In both of the last cases the question of turbary was considered by the Land Commission, and the right of turbary was included in the judicial rent fixed. It appeared to him that the practice of the Land Commission at the present moment was extremely fair to both parties; but if there was a complaint to be made on the question of turbary, he did not think it was of such a serious nature as to induce the House to agree with the Bill of the hon. Gentleman, which, not only as regarded turbary, but as regarded almost every provision of the Land Act of 1881, would add fresh confusion to the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland. The Bill proposed to shorten the term of judicial tenure, but it did not propose to do so even in the manner which was recommended by the Cowper Commission. The Cowper Commission undoubtedly did recommend that the 15 years' tenancy should be reduced, but they thought that if the tenancy were reduced it ought not to involve all the complications which now arose when a tenant came into Court. The rent which was to be paid in future, for instance, should be arranged in some automatic manner, and should only have regard to the rise and fall in prices. The hon. Gentleman's proposal would entail every seven years all the expense, and, he might say, all the confusion, which now existed when a great number of tenants on a large property went into Court; and it would undoubtedly, he was afraid, tend to re-introduce in many parts of Ireland feelings between landlord and tenant which now, he was glad to say, were rapidly abating. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Blane) said that he did not imagine that the Bill would receive much favour from the Representatives of close Corporations. Representatives of close Corporations in that House would have an opportunity later on in the Session of dealing with the Bill which, he informed the House before, was to be drawn up so as to embody the desires of the tenants of Trinity College, and of all classes of perpetuity leaseholders. The condition of the Trinity College tenants was the main point upon which the hon. Gentleman had invited the House to agree to his Bill, and he had said he felt a sense of responsibility weighing very heavily upon him. He (Mr. Macartney) hoped the hon. Member would not deny that they on the Ministerial side of the House felt a certain amount of responsibility in connection with the last question. He did not know whether the hon. Member would admit that, but, at all events, he asked the House to take it, that he and others who thought with him were quite as anxious as any hon. Member from Ireland that the Land Question should be settled. They might differ, and undoubtedly they did differ, as to how it should be settled; but surely hon. Gentlemen opposite could not imagine it helped him (Mr. Macartney) and his hon. Friends in any way, either politically or otherwise, that the Land Question should be kept unsettled. If he was opposing the hon. Gentleman to-day, it was because he sincerely believed that the Bill would not in the slightest degree help the settlement of the Land Question. He reminded the House that the hon. Gentleman stated that the Bill did not satisfy himself, and that, even if they were to pass the Bill, he would probably next year bestow some additional gift on the Irish landlords, who only took a small instalment in the 17th clause. There might be something to be said for this Bill if it settled the question, but the hon. Gentleman did not propose to settle the question; he merely proposed to confer benefit on the landlords. If it was to be supposed that he (Mr. Macartney) in any way represented the landlords of Ireland, he might say he declined the hon. Gentleman's gift with thanks. He hoped the hon. Member would reconsider, before introducing any other Bill, the question of turbary, because he believed that as far as turbary went, if it were an impediment to the action of any of the Land Courts in Ireland, it was an impediment which existed largely in regard to the Land Purchase Act. More difficulties had arisen with regard to the question of turbary in connection with the administration of the Land Purchase Act than with regard to any other question. It was unnecessary to delay the House further; the Bill had an object of enormous magnitude; it would break up the whole settlement of 1881; and, having regard to the fact that the Mover of the Bill had made no attempt to justify either its major or minor provisions, he (Mr. Macartney) asked the House to assent to his Motion, "That the Bill be read a second time this day six months."

Mr. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "this day six months."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) had said that the Bill upset the settlement of 1881, and his criticisms of the Bill had almost driven him (Mr. Gill) to the conclusion that the hon. Gentleman had not studied the Bill. What was the proposal in regard to arrears? If the House would allow him to read the clause, they would see that the hon. Gentleman's conclusion was entirely inaccurate. The Bill proposed to give to the Courts power to take evidence of all the circumstances which had led to certain arrears, and to decide whether, in view of such circumstances, the whole or what part of such arrears ought to be paid. That was not a proposal to wipe out or to reduce the arrears of the tenant at all; it was simply a proposal to give the Land Courts equitable jurisdiction in regard to arrears. The clause, as drafted in the Bill, was simply taken word for word, with a change of name, from the Crofters' Act, which was the law of the land in Scotland, and which worked successfully. At the present moment a most serious agrarian crisis was gathering to a head in Ireland, in consequence of the accumulation of arrears upon certain small holdings, and in consequence of the exercise of the power which the 7th section of the Act of last year gave to the landlords to prevent, by reason of arrears, the tenants from obtaining the benefit of the Act of 1881. Now, what had taken place on various properties all over the country? The tenant was in arrear, say, for one, two, or three years' rent. He appealed to the Land Court to fix a fair rent; the landlord demanded payment of arrears; the tenant was unable to pay, or, like the Louth tenants, to whom the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) referred on the second reading of the Arrears Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), he asked that the landlord should wait for his arrears until the Court fixed a fair rent, and should then be content with the arrears at the same figure as the fair rent had been fixed at. The landlords, in thousands of instances all over the country, met that demand by suing for ejectment in the County Courts. The tenant was kept out of the Land Court by reason of the arrears of the old rent which he was unable to pay. That was a most deplorable state of things, and he (Mr. Gill) did not think that in any quarter of the House any hon. Gentleman would get up in his place and say that it was a just and equitable state of things. It was owing to the character of the law that the tenant was prevented from obtaining the benefits of legislation which the House was most desirous he should have access to. The Bill before the House simply proposed to alter the technicality of the law and the character of the law, so far as to enable the tenants to have free access to the benefits of that legislation; and it proposed to do so in a manner for which there was a most valuable and important precedent—it proposed to do so in the manner in which the same difficulty was met in Scotland under the Crofters' Act of 1886. When the tenant applied to the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed, this Bill simply proposed to give the Land Court the power of taking into account the tenant's indebtedness in respect to arrears of rent, and of arriving at an equitable decision as to how much of those arrears he should pay, or whether, in justice or in the exigencies of the case, he should pay any arrears at all. This was not a sweeping proposal to wipe out or reduce arrears. The Court to whom the tenant applied would inquire into all the circumstances of the case, and it would make what was tantamount to the same inquiry as would be made in the case of a bankrupt. The Court would have power to inquire how the tenant came into arrear; whether his position was due to his own laziness or thriftlessness, or to causes over which he had any control. That was a proposal which could do no injury to any class in the country; it could not do injury to the landlords, except the landlords contended that the tribunals before whom such cases would be heard were not tribunals such as they could expect justice from. The hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) referred to certain cases of arrears in the North of Ireland, in which he stated that it was habitual on the part of the tenants to allow arrears to accumulate. He (Mr. Gill) was glad the hon. Member referred to that, because within the last few days County Tyrone had afforded a very striking illustration of the strength of the case for this Bill. The County Court Judge of Tyrone, Sir Francis Brady, in one day last week granted 200 ejectment decrees on account of arrears of rent. The arrears in almost all these cases were arrears upon the smallest, the poorest class of holdings, which thus showed that the allegation of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) was, so far as County Tyrone was concerned, entirely without foundation. The arrears were only for one, or two, or three years' rent; in but a very few instances, indeed, did the arrears run beyond three years—did they run to four or six years. A very great number of them were for a single year's rent. The arrears accumulated during years of very severe distress; the tenants were unable to pay them; but with almost brutal severity the landlords were suing them, and endeavouring to evict them from their holdings. He hoped the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) was in his place, and would have something to say upon the question of the proceedings for arrears in County Tyrone. When the Arrears Bill was under discussion, a short time ago, that hon. Member stated that his constituents were not interested in the question of arrears at all, and that, in acting as he did, he acted out of a pure public spirit of benevolence. Now, they found the hon. Gentleman's own county being rent in the most cruel and ruthless fashion by the landlords in respect of arrears. The case of Tyrone was the case of most of the counties of Ireland at the present moment. Judgment processes were being obtained by hundreds and thousands for arrears of rent of a similar character to those he had referred to. Let him point out, moreover, that the arrears were in connection with small holdings of £2, £5, and £6 a-year rent, the very poorest and most wretched class of holdings in the country. What said Judge Monroe, one of the Judges of the Land Judges' Court, the other day in Dublin? An application was made to him to have a reduction made in the case of the Bomford estate in County Westmeath. He granted a reduction of 30 per cent, and then the tenants' counsel made an application to have the arrears of the tenants wiped out. One tenant owed four years' rent, and Mr. Justice Monroe, in response to that application, said there was not the slightest use in holding on to arrears on small holdings of this kind. They were but small holdings such as these in the case in Tyrone he had referred to, and such formed the bulk of the holdings on which these arrears difficulties arose. Mr. Justice Monroe accordingly made an order that a year's rent should be paid, and that the arrears should be wiped out. The discretion which Mr. Justice Monroe had in the limited class of cases which came before him was simply the discretion which they now asked the House to extend to those tribunals before whom the bulk of the cases to have fair rent fixed in Ireland came. He and his hon. Friends simply wished to transfer the jurisdiction, which was already possessed by one Court in Ireland—unfortunately a Court whose powers were of a limited description—and was already possessed by the Crofters' Commission in Scotland, which was analogous to the Irish Land Commission. They wished simply to extend the powers which were already given to certain tribunals by law. There was nothing revolutionary and nothing novel in their proposal whatsoever. A grave crisis existed, and the crisis was growing graver and larger every day, and they asked the House to meet that crisis by a very simple and a very reasonable proposal, and one which had already been accepted by the House in respect to a large part of Scotland, and of at least one Court in Ireland. This Bill proposed to improve the method by which the Land Commission should take into account the improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors in title. He thought that was a matter of most vital importance at the present time. People in numerous instances all over Ireland, from whatever the cause might be, were losing confidence in the tribunals which were now fixing rents in Ireland, and they were declaring that these tribunals were fixing rents upon improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors in title in a manner in which the Commissioners had no right to fix rents at all. Take the case of County Louth. A Commission there had been fixing rent for some months past, and all classes of tenants—Protestants, Catholics, Loyalists, and Nationalists—had been holding common meetings and passing resolutions expressing their utter dissatisfaction with the decisions of this tribunal; they had also expressed dissatisfaction at the *personnel* of the Commission, which they declared to be composed in the greater part of the partizans of the landlords. They pointed to the fact that Mr. Wrench, the head of the Land Commission, who had chiefly to do with the selection of the men who were to compose the Sub-Commissioners, was the son-in-law of Sir A. Bellingham, a large landowner in the county of Louth, whose rents were being revised. It was said that the Commission were fixing rent upon the improvements of the tenants. One of Sir A. Bellingham's tenants had made most important improvements; he had very highly cultivated land, and he had built a house and different offices, and had fenced and drained his holding most effectively. This tenant had had his rent reduced in the year 1888 by 18 per cent only. That was a grossly inadequate reduction, considering the depression which agriculture had suffered from in recent years, and considering the amount of improvements which the tenant himself and his predecessors in title had made on the estate. This tenant was one of the men whose means were such as to enable him to risk the heavy costs of an appeal in case the appeal went against him; but what redress could he really have when he was practically appealing from a tribunal which he believed, and stated he believed, to have been expressly packed by his landlord's son-in-law to the son-in-law himself? The result of recent appeals in Ireland had been such as to practically destroy confidence in the Appeal Court as at present constituted. In numerous cases where tenants had appealed, mark what had occurred. The rents had either been confirmed or raised, and raised by sums amounting to 10*s.* or 13*s.* or 15*s.* He thought that was the most grotesque evidence which could possibly be adduced of the humbug and rottenness of the Appeal Court as at present constituted. What did it mean? Would anyone tell him that any man, or any combination of men, could fix the value of a holding so closely as 10*s.* one way or the other? Yet here was a tribunal in Dublin, who had never seen the land, and who had not even got the assistance of a Court Valuer's evidence, reversing and changing the finding of the Sub-Commissioners, who were, at least, supposed to be practical men, and who had made a careful inspection of the holdings. This was a most extraordinary state of things. The Appeal Court would change the rent by 10*s.* or 15*s.*, as though they had got in their minds of necessity exactly the value of the holding, which they had never seen at all. In consequence of this kind of thing occurring in respect to County Louth, the tenants whose cases had not been heard—and there were over 1,000 of them—had held meetings in Dundalk and Drogheda, and had passed resolutions, apart altogether from any dictation of the National League or any other body, to withdraw their cases altogether from the Court unless the *personnel* of the Commission was changed, or unless some legislation was adopted by the House of Commons which would compel the Commission not to increase the rent in respect to improvements made by the tenants themselves or their predecessors in title. If these tenants were really driven to take that course it was a serious state of things. Louth had always been a quiet and orderly county; but if it was driven to declare itself unable to place confidence in the tribunals which the law had set up, they would have a state of feeling existing between landlord and tenant, which he, for his part—and he was the Representative of one-half of the county—would very deeply deplore indeed. He sincerely hoped that one result of this discussion would be that some change would be made in the character of the Sub-Commission, and that the Government, if they did not see their way to accept this Bill, or the provisions of it dealing with the improvements of tenants and with the arrears of rent, would at least announce that they had some intention themselves of taking action in the matter. He considered the proposal in regard to arrears as most pressing, and as one which the House could not afford to neglect. It was simply a proposal to give that jurisdiction to the Land Commission Courts which was already possessed by one Court in Ireland, and had been exercised by the Crofter Commission in Scotland. He hoped the Government, having regard to the fact that there was a precedent for this proposal, and to the fact that the main principles of the Bill had been accepted by the House, and that some such Bill as this was called for by the state of things in Ireland, especially upon small holdings throughout the country generally, would show some appreciation of the gravity of the situation, and the necessity of meeting the proposal in a proper spirit.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, that he listened with some surprise to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Blane) who moved the second reading of the Bill, because, while the Bill consisted of 18 clauses, the hon. Gentleman passed over the first 10 of them in absolute silence. But those clauses were, in his (Colonel Waring's) opinion, very important clauses, perhaps the most important in the whole Bill. It had been complained that rents were fixed in respect of tenants' improvements. No one, for a moment, contended that any rent should be put upon *bonâ fide* improvements made by a tenant at his own expense. That was not claimed by any of the resident landlords in Ireland; there was no attempt to enforce rent upon improvements in the true sense of the term. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] It was very easy for hon. Gentlemen opposite to cry "Oh, oh!" He knew perfectly well that they meant to say that every piece of work done on the land during, say, the last 50 years should be charged against the landlord. Suppose a negligent and lazy tenant in former times had not taken the trouble to keep his pasture land in proper order, was the landlord to be taxed if a later tenant cleaned the land and brought it into a condition fit for use? The hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Gill) alluded to the estate of Sir A. Bellingham, and talked of a tenant who had made a large addition to the buildings on his holding. But did the landlord claim those buildings? The hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that, as a rule, in the North of Ireland, landlords, when going into the Land Court, did not claim buildings at all. It was certainly quite clear that under the Bill a great many things would be claimed by tenants as improvements which were simply rectifications of slovenly farming of a preceding tenant. Turning to the question of arrears, he must say he thought the question was pretty well threshed out in the debate upon the Bill which the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) introduced just before the House separated for the Easter Recess. Arrears consisted of three kinds. There were arrears which had been brought about by the action of a certain association of which hon. Gentlemen who sat below the Gangway opposite were distinguished Members, arrears which had been brought about by tenants withholding the rents which they were able to pay and which many of them would have paid if they had been left alone. Another class of arrears consisted of bogus arrears. They were the arrears of tenants who reckoned on future measures of relief, and in the meantime kept their money in the bank without tendering their rent to the landlord. Lastly, there were the general arrears into which many tenants fell in consequence of their ignorance of agriculture and indolence. He was afraid many other people besides farmers were in debt from similar causes, although he had never heard any proposition made to Parliament for their relief. The majority of those now in arrear were farmers who were in arrear in 1882, and whose indebtedness to their landlords was wiped out by the Act of that year. He knew a case where a man owed arrears in 1882 of £30 upon a farm for which he paid £24 1*s*. 3*d*. in 1881 and £16 8*s*. 10*d*. in 1882. The Arrears Act stepped in and wiped off the arrears up to November, 1883, giving the tenant a fresh start; but the result was that in four years, on a rent of £16 8*s*., the tenant now owed his landlord 30*s*. more in the shape of arrears than he owed in 1882; so that he was in a condition to require another Arrears Act, and to wipe off his indebtedness again. Were men of this kind to be relieved by Parliament periodically? If so, he maintained that it was most unfair to the tenant who paid his rent honestly and who never missed paying it punctually at every gale. How was it to be ascertained that the arrears had been fairly incurred? He thought it would be impossible for any Court to decide that question. There was nothing to go upon but the simple unsupported oath of the tenant himself. He knew that the Irish tenant had great respect for an oath, and he would not insinuate that they would deliberately and on purpose tell any glaring untruth; but he was also aware that where their own interests were concerned they were likely to be guilty of much exaggeration. He recollected an instance in which only last year a tenant alleged that certain land he was farming was not worth 16*s*. an acre; but when he appeared before a Court of Arbitration the tenant swore that the same land was worth 40*s.* an acre, and that his interest in it was worth 20 years' purchase of that sum. He had no doubt that that tenant thought he was telling the truth on both occasions; but any person who was connected with the Irish land must have noticed how strong the discrepancies were in the evidence. It would be extremely difficult for any Court to deal with the question, and he saw but one way in which these arrears could be satisfactorily dealt with, and that hon. Members opposite had rejected—namely, the fair proposal of the Government last year that the indebtedness of the tenant should be treated just like the indebtedness of any other person, and that his estates should be distributed among his creditors in proportion to their claims upon him. That proposal, however, was scouted by the followers of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), on account, he fancied, of their sympathy for the money lender. He would say nothing of the gombeen man. The gombeen man was said to have disappeared, but the money lender had screwed more out of the sweat of the Irish tenants within the last generation than all of the landlords put together. He made that assertion without fear of contradiction, and if hon. Members would go among the Irish tenants, he ventured to think they would not feel inclined to take the warm part they did now in support of the money lender. The gombeen man was said to have disappeared. Perhaps he had been absorbed by the benevolent grocer who sold goods to the poor starving tenants and charged them 25 per cent. He would tell a short story. He had the misfortune to have a few tenants himself. One of them was an old fellow named Jack Harwood. On one occasion Harwood went to pay a small bill at the grocery stores, which had been owing for some time. He was asked if he did not want some bacon. At that time Harwood was pretty well off, and said he supposed he could do with a little bacon. The parcel was wrapped up and taken home, when it was discovered to be nothing but a ham bone. He took it back, but was compelled to receive it, and gave a bill in payment. That bill had been constantly renewed, interest was charged upon it, and in the course of 8 or 10 years it amounted to £20, for which this man's farm was sold by the benevolent grocer in question. If hon. Members wanted to know where the gombeen man had gone, he would tell them that he had gone into the grocer's shop, or had set up a shop of his own to supply the starving tenants with provisions. He found charging 25 per cent on unpaid accounts the most profitable form of lending money. Something had been stated in reference to Mr. Justice Monroe's recent decision. He would give the decision of another Judge of the Land Court, Judge Boyd. In the Court presided over by that learned Judge certain tenants had been evicted, and they were told that they might resume their holdings, provided they got 90 per cent reduction of rent. Judge Boyd did not see that, and, accordingly, instructed the Receiver to take proceedings. The result was somewhat singular; the rents which were previously declared to be impossible were all paid within a few days. Nothing would give him more satisfaction than the wiping out of every arrear due to him if he felt that it could be done without inflicting serious injustice on those tenants who had been steadily paying their rents. He did not think the matter was one which called for legislation on the part of that House. He did not believe that any landlord, except the very small residuum, would issue process for the recovery of arrears if he thought the tenant had no means of paying. The turbary question he did not think he would enter into, because, after all, it was a very small one, and not of material importance. Of course, they heard a great deal about the dreadful state to which the tenants in Ireland had been reduced, and how much more oppressed they were than any other tenants on the face of the terrestrial Globe. Statistics, however, did not carry out that contention with strict accuracy. It was admitted that there were as many tenant farmers in proportion to the population in Ireland as anywhere else. One great argument which had been used against all the landlords in Ireland for many years was that they had, by their exactions, driven a large number of the tenants out of the country. This was given as a proof of the harsh way in which the tenants had been treated; but what was the fact in regard to the proportion of tenants who had emigrated? It was admitted that a great part of the emigration from Ireland was to the United States of America. During last year there emigrated to the United States from Switzerland six farmers to every nine labourers, from Germany seven farmers to every 12 labourers, from Scotland one farmer to every three labourers, from Italy two farmers to every seven labourers, from England one farmer to every six labourers, and from Ireland one farmer to every 10 labourers. He thought that was a question that was worthy of consideration by hon. Gentlemen opposite. He might be told that the persons who emigrated as labourers were really farmers; but his experience of Ireland was that if a man owned a potato garden, he called himself a farmer, and would never dream of describing himself as a day labourer when he knew that he could go to a country which would receive him with open arms as a farmer.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the hon. and gallant Gentleman to say where he got his figures from?

Colonel WARING said, he quoted them from *The Farm and Home*, which professed to derive them from the United States Government Returns. He should be happy to show the hon. Member the quotation if he desired to see it. He had no wish to detain the House longer. In conclusion, he would only express an opinion that the question had already been fairly settled, and he thought they ought not to disturb the tranquillity which was beginning to prevail in Ireland by entirely re-opening the Act of 1881.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. J. E. ELLIS said, the hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring), who had just resumed his seat, had made a remark in which he thought the Irish tenants, when they read the hon. and gallant Member's speech to-morrow, would thoroughly agree. The hon. and gallant Member said he would not suggest that the Irish tenants, on going into Court, would tell any great untruths but that it was strange how persons, when they were looking after their own interests, viewed matters through strangely-coloured glasses. He thought when the Irish tenants read some of the assertions of the hon. and gallant Member they would be inclined to think that he had been looking through very highly coloured glasses. The hon. and gallant Member had stated that he had hoped the House of Commons would not have been troubled again this Session with discussing the question of arrears of rent in Ireland. He thought that was rather a short-sighted view to take, and he could assure hon. Members opposite that the House of Commons would be troubled with the question, and some other grievances which the Bill proposed to remedy, until they were settled. The hon. and gallant Gentleman also remarked that neither the Mover nor the hon. Gentleman who followed had gone very closely into the details of the proposed measure. It struck him that that was an unfair comment to make in respect of those speeches; but, at all events, the hon. and gallant Gentleman had hardly supplied the omission, for the whole of his speech related, as far as he could gather, to the subject of arrears. It struck him forcibly—and he thought it must have struck anyone who had paid attention to the subject—that the Bill before the House, and the discussion which was taking place upon it, formed part of the great drama which had been unfolded over many years in that House with regard to the question of Irish land. They were only to-day reading a few pages from the great volume of the struggle in Ireland between landlord and tenant which had been going on for generations. There had always been two pictures on the subject presented to the House. As regards the first, he would only quote the utterances of three of the Members of Her Majesty's Government from many others which he could quote. He did so because they fell from men of high position in their Party, and their utterances were clear and to the point. The First Lord of the Treasury, speaking on the 20th of July last year, used these words—

> "We entered upon a vicious surrender in 1881; we brought the State in between two parties who ought to have been left free to make their contracts one with the other, and the State—as the State always will if it inter-

feres with free contract between man and man —has made a mess of it."

The political philosophy of the right hon. Gentleman was rather faulty when he remarked that whenever the State interfered it made a mess of it. The right hon. Gentleman had been a Member of the House of Commons for 20 years, and had been a Member of more than one Administration. If he would look back to all the Acts which had been passed he would find that they were passed on the fact of the interference of the State with free contract between man and man. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, on the 11th of July last year, declared that "the principles on which the Act of 1881 was based were fundamentally erroneous;" and last winter the right hon. Gentleman declared that the Irish tenant was "the spoiled child of the English Legislature." The Prime Minister, speaking on the 12th of January, used these significant words—

> "In my opinion we have made two steps in a downward course since this depression commenced. I regard the Irish Land Act of 1881 as one of those downward steps. I shall venture to maintain that which I believe to be the truth—namely, that the course on which we started in 1881 was a mistaken course, dangerous to property, and, therefore, dangerous to the best interests of the Empire. And mark where the danger lay. It was not simply that Parliament interfered and said—'You shall only let your land on such and such conditions; you shall only let it at such a rent and on such terms as we lay down.' That might have been unwise, but if Parliament gave fair notice it was not unjust. What was unjust was that when a certain number of landowners had let land to a certain number of tenants on certain agreed terms for Parliament to come down and say—'We will twist and turn those terms entirely to the advantage of the tenant.'"

He presumed that the ideas conveyed in those quotations were those which agitated the mind of Her Majesty's Government at the present moment. They represented that the Act of 1881 transferred, in a revolutionary manner, the property of one man to another. They, in fact, suggested that it was a confiscation of property. He thought it was desirable that the House should know whether Her Majesty's Government adhered to those ideas at the present moment. Did they still regard the Act of 1881 and their own Act of 1887 as following the same principle; did they regard those Acts in the manner stated by the Prime Minister on the 12th of January last?—because they on the Liberal side of the House regarded the Act of 1881 as a tardy placing of the law in relation to the facts. They maintained that the principles embodied in that Act gave the tenant the property which really had been his in equity before. There was, then, a most fundamental distinction between the views held by the two sides of the House on this subject. He had always been and always should be a believer in continuity in such matters. The Land Question had not grown up within recent times. There appeared to prevail in the Press and in the speeches of public men an idea that this Irish struggle began when the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) entered the House and created the present Irish Parliamentary Party. Those who would go back two or three generations up to the time of the passing of the Act of Union would see that over and over again the grievances of the Irish tenant and the relations between the owners and occupiers of the soil had been discussed in that House. Lord Stanley delivered a great speech on the subject in the House of Lords on the 9th of June, 1845, and Mr. O'Connell delivered another on the 3rd of April, 1846. Those who would read those speeches would readily admit that the struggle between the landlord and the tenant in Ireland had its roots in the far past. He was struck with the acquaintance possessed in those days with the wants and grievances of the Irish tenant, compared with what was the case now. They were told by a high authority the other night that there was not a man on the Treasury Bench who knew the difference between a horse and a cow. Without endorsing that view, he must say that in speaking of 30 or 40 years ago on the question of the Irish land, some of the occupants of the Treasury displayed a singular want of historical knowledge. During the first 40 years of this century five Acts of Parliament had been passed solely in the interest of the landlord—namely, in the years 1816, 1818, 1821, 1830, and 1836, circumscribing, diminishing, and mutilating the rights of the tenant, grievously afflicting him, magnifying the rights of the landlord, and placing him in an entirely different position from that which he occupied prior to the

Union. In 1881 the Bessborough Commission, which consisted of three Irish landlords and one Irish Judge, made use of this significant sentence—

> "In many instances, principally in connection with the law of ejectment, powers have been conferred upon the landlords in Ireland that have no existence in England."

The debates not only in the House of Commons, but in the other House of Parliament, contained ample evidence of the abuse of the great powers which had been conferred upon the landlords. The speeches of Members of the House of Commons in those days were saturated with evidence that their sentiments of humanity had been shocked by the exercise of these powers. The human nature of Sir Robert Peel was so stirred that, speaking from the Treasury Bench in 1843, he said he hoped it was possible that the expression of indignation on the part of the House of Commons might have some effect in checking the power of legal ejectment. He wished they could hear some similar suggestion from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The circumstances of the Clanricarde and other estates in Ireland were very similar to those which called forth that expression of opinion from Sir Robert Peel; and he would repeat that if they could have some indication from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he had been touched by the circumstances of the case, and that the state of things had made a deep impression on the minds of the English Ministry, he would be very pleased indeed. Nor was this sentiment confined to speech-making. What happened in 1853? The Irish Attorney General brought in four Bills on the 22nd of November, 1852, of a most remarkable character. Anyone who would take the trouble to go through those Bills introduced by Mr. Napier would see that at last the conscience of the House of Commons was awakened to the state of things existing between landlord and tenant. One of those Bills contained a clause with this Proviso—that if it could be shown that a landlord had neglected to keep the house of a tenant in a proper state of repair he should forfeit his power of recovering rent until it was put in repair. There were hundreds of thousands of acres in Ireland at the present moment on which, if such a provision were enforced, no rent could be recovered at all. He need not say that that Proviso did not pass into law, but it was a Proviso contained in the Bill as originally introduced by the Government Head, the late Lord Derby. For 40 years Parliament helped the landlords, and during the next 30 years the House of Commons was in a state of doubt; but in 1870 a new chapter was opened. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) pointed to the fact three weeks ago that it was immediately after the Household Franchise was passed for the boroughs that that change took place. The Prime Minister maintained that the Act of 1870 commenced a career of confiscation. On the other hand, hon. Members on that side of the House thought in 1870 Parliament very tardily and very imperfectly commenced to give to the tenant some of those rights which he had actually possessed long before. In fact, the whole conflict was about the ownership of certain property. The question was to whom did the property rightly belong? They might call it "rent," but that word did not convey to the mind the correct idea. The Prime Minister, in the speech he delivered in January of the present year, asserted that the course which was commenced in 1881 was a mistaken one, dangerous to property, and the best interests of the Empire. He wished they could hear a little less about the rights of property and a little more of those of humanity. He had always understood that property was created for the purpose of humanity, but it might be imagined from the utterances of Lord Salisbury that humanity existed for the sake of property. He believed that property was the reward of thrift and industry, and he would be false to his convictions and a poor Representative of those who sent him to that House if he were to give countenance to some of the wild doctrines that were heard in some quarters as to the rights of property. But he returned to the question—To whom did the property belong? Who created the property? If any hon. Member would visit some of the great estates on which these rights of property, with the connivance and assistance of Her Majesty's Government, were being so ruthlessly exercised at the present moment, he would find a population creeping up the sides of the hills, and even barren bogs and inhospitable hill-sides turned into fruitful fields with ditches, fences, and everything that made the land worth occupying. Who had done that? It must be well known to every man in that House, who had looked into the matter, that not a single sixpence had ever been contributed by the owner of the estate who was exacting in the most merciless manner unjust rents for the occupation of this "property." The entire value was made by those from whom the rent was taken. Not only did this apply to land on the hill-side, but if they went to Wicklow, Derry, and other parts of Ulster, they would find there men of substantial means who had spent thousands of pounds in creating the value of the land they rented, and towards which the landlord had never contributed a single farthing. He thought that no one who looked carefully into the facts would quarrel with the definition which was given in the Bill in regard to "improvements," and he ventured to say that if the hon. Gentleman who spoke on the other side of the House a short time ago would really act up to that which he had suggested—namely, that no landlord could wish to derive rent from property which did not belong to him, he would support Clause 5 of the Bill. The Prime Minister, in the speech he had already quoted, spoke of the principles of the Land Act of 1881. The noble Lord said—

> "Supposing a bank had lent money to a certain number of people at a fixed rate of interest, and suppose Parliament were suddenly to enact that that money should never be repaid and that a fixed rate of interest should be lower by one-third, I think you would cry out that Parliament was exceeding its province and was committing a considerable act of injustice. Yet that, and nothing else but that, is the principle on which the Act of 1881 proceeds."

Now, he was prepared to say, with some knowledge of banking, that nothing could be more fallacious than that statement. He would give a really analogous case. Supposing a bank lent £100 to a man, and he by his industry and thrift turned that into £1,000, and that the bank charged interest at a rate of its own fixing on the whole £1,000: that would be precisely what the landlords in Ireland had done and what the English Legislature had enabled them to do. The noble Lord said—

Mr. J. E. Ellis

> "A certain number of landlords have let their land to a certain number of tenants on certain agreed terms."

Surely the Prime Minister must have forgotten the Report of the Bessborough Commission. On page 21 hon. Members would see a most instructive paragraph on this very question of freedom of contract. The Bessborough Commission said distinctly—

> "Freedom of contract in the case of the majority of the Irish tenants, large and small, does not exist."

He ventured to think that these circumstances showed that the terms "landlord" and "tenant" were entirely inapplicable to the state of Ireland, and that was the true reason of the ridiculous nature of the "bankruptcy" proposals from certain quarters. He did not think he had ever heard effrontery carried further than in the case of the hon. Member for South Birmingham the other day. The hon. Member knew little or nothing about land, and yet he told the hon. Member for Cork, who ranked as one of the half-dozen real statesmen in the House, that he did not understand the effect of his own Bill! It was a favourite device of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to quote past legislation against those who sat on the Liberal side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said the other night that it lowered the rents of the Irish landlords but gave them Parliamentary authority, and rendered them more secure. Well, the right hon. Gentleman must make up his mind in this matter. Was this legislation bad or good? If it was bad, the right hon. Gentleman was not entitled to throw it in their teeth and declare it to be good and final. Hon. Members on that side of the House maintained that there was no finality about the legislation of 1881 and 1887, but that it was imperfect. Why was it imperfect? It was because a great deal of it was passed in the teeth of the men who knew more about the subject than any other persons in the House. The hon. Member for Cork, in the year 1881, was very careful not to assume any responsibility for the measure which was passed in that year. The error of passing legislation in respect of the Irish land in the teeth of the opinions of Irish Representatives had cost this country very dear. What was happening in Ireland was what would always happen so far as the landlords were concerned. As soon as an Act of Parliament was passed they set themselves to mutilate it and pick holes in it. The landlords had availed themselves of every possible means at their disposal, and, so far as the laws themselves were concerned, they bristled with opportunities for the exercise of such action on the part of the landlords. He might give some examples by way of illustration. As regards the Act of 1881 there were provisions respecting non-residents on pasture lettings; occupants of town parks; demesne land; home farms; tenancies created since 1881; and as to covenants in leases preventing tillage and covenants in leases against meadowing. He would mention a fact which came under his own notice. It was a case in which two men had a joint holding, but the fences separating the holding were somewhat irregular. With the consent of the landlord they obtained permission to straighten the fences, so as to make the little holding rather better for agricultural purposes. But what was the effect? What they did carried them out of the Act of 1881, and they lost all the benefit of that Act. He had no doubt the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) would be able to give scores of similar cases in which the landlords, immediately after an Act of Parliament was passed, set themselves to pick holes in it. No sooner was legislation in favour of the tenants passed than the landlords set themselves to work to tear the Act of Parliament in pieces. And what was quite as serious, those who were administering the Land Act were in sympathy with the landlords and opposed to the tenants. Not content with this, the Chief Secretary had brought forward a Bill further to mutilate the original Land Act in the interests of the landlords. The fact was that the Government of the day were in close alliance with the rack-renting Irish landlords, and the Chief Secretary was the cat's-paw of the Clanricardes and King-Harmans of Ireland. The Government of the day placed the forces under their control at the disposal of the landlords, and so enabled them to baton and sabre the Irish people and to stifle public opinion in Ireland. [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] He was glad to have that cheer from the hon. Member, seeing that within the last few days the hon. Member had been a witness to the occurrences he had referred to, and he was glad to see the hon. Member safely back again. Last night he asked a question of the First Lord of the Treasury respecting a "printed statement" left by an influential deputation of Irish landlords with the Prime Minister. Seeing that the Government placed at the disposal of the Irish landlords the Forces of the country, the House of Commons was entitled to know what demands such persons as the Duke of Abercorn and his relatives and other Irish landlords had been making upon the English taxpayer in their recent interview with the Prime Minister. Were they asking the Government to remodel the Irish Land Commission. The Government were with one hand placing their whole force at the disposal of the landlords, crushing down all combination among the Irish tenants, which was stated by the late Under Secretary for Ireland to be their only salvation; and, on the other hand, they were, through the mouth of the Prime Minister, inviting the landlords to exhibit greater unanimity and closer combination. He did not think that when the English people understood what was taking place they would allow the present condition of things to continue very long. The only safety for property in Ireland was in making the laws relating to land harmonize with the just and reasonable wishes of the Irish people. If this were the case, no people would be more truly Conservative in the best sense of the term in their principles than the Irish tenants; and, in his opinion, no people more easy to govern. The late Lord Melbourne sent out a very strong man to Ireland to fill the post of Under Secretary, Mr. Thomas Drummond, who did not hesitate to take steps for the preservation of law and order. He was, however, penetrated with an absolute sense of justice, and he was the author of the celebrated maxim that "Property has its duties as well as its rights." In the year 1785, one of the greatest men who ever sat in that Assembly, William Pitt, said, speaking of the commercial treatment of Ireland, that that

> "Which had been the system had counteracted the kindness of Providence and suspended the industry and enterprize of man."

It was only because of the unquenchable spirit of the Irish people that these words had not come true as regards land. On that side of the House they were resolved that the existing state of things should no longer continue, that the intentions of Providence should no longer be counteracted, and that enterprize and industry should receive their due reward. He did not underestimate the magnitude of the great struggle, of which the Land Question only formed a small part. On that side of the House they would acknowledge the force of the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that "patience is an Imperial virtue." For his own part, he deprecated any fever of exultation for Spalding and Southwark; and, on the other hand, he had no sympathy with the unreasonable depression which had been felt in certain quarters in regard to Deptford and Doncaster. They would go on unflinchingly in the task they had set themselves of bringing to the people of Ireland good government, and a realization of those just aspirations which would make them a loyal and contented people.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, the history of the Bill before the House was a miniature history of the Irish Land Question. It was somewhat remarkable as being the seventh time since 1881 that the Irish Party had brought in a Bill practically similar in most of its details to the present measure. During the 10 years subsequent to the passing of the Act of 1870, about a score of Bills amending the Act of 1870 had been ruthlessly rejected. The Irish Party began a system of bringing in amending Bills which were rejected by the House. Many of his hon. Friends had dealt principally with this measure as one affecting arrears; but it was right that the general scope and purport of the measure should be dealt with, and they should ask from the Government some distinct statement of their objection to the various principles of the Bill. There was one important clause in the Bill to which he would direct attention. In 1881 the House exacted that no rent was to be allowed or made payable upon improvements of a tenant or his predecessor in title, unless compensated by the landlord or his predecessor in title. Constructions had been placed upon that section which had led to most iniquitous confiscation of the improvements, the contention being that the enjoyment by a tenant of his improvements was to some extent a compensation of them. During the progress of the Bill of 1881 through the House the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had declined to accept the Amendments proposed by the Irish Members, on the ground that the Courts could not decide in the way they wished to guard against with regard to the tenants' improvements; but, as a matter of fact, the Court of Appeal, by a majority, had just decided in the way that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had said they could not. That right hon. Gentleman had repeatedly declared that wherever the improvements belonged to the tenant, enjoyment of those improvements should not be held as compensation for them. Yet, despite that emphatic declaration, the Land Courts for the last seven years held that enjoyment of improvements was compensation for them. That, to a certain extent, the 1st clause of the Bill would remedy by a very simple provision, and he could not see what objection the Government had to it. There had been a constant confiscation of the tenants' improvements going on, especially with regard to leaseholders, simply because of the surrender of leases. It was a most unhappy thing that the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" laid down a doctrine which nobody could understand. The decision was so extraordinary that where there were four Judges to three on one point, there were on a subsequent point three Judges to four, and one of the Judges who made up the minority in one case was one of the Judges who made up the majority in the other, and decided, by a majority, a principle which the four Judges who had previously formed the majority had declared to be bad law. Notwithstanding that extraordinary state of facts, the tenants of Ireland continued to be robbed of their improvements. He took from the newspapers of the 28th March, the decision of a Sub-Commission presided over by a very able barrister (Mr. Bailey), who expressed views which he (Mr. Healy) did not agree with, of the law under "Adams *v.*

Dunseath," and that would show the House the way in which the tenants were being robbed of their own property by the most miserable technicalities possible to conceive. In the case in question the tenant was a Rev. John Kane, who held under a lease. He paid £275 in 1879 to the representatives of the former tenant, and bought the interest in the existing lease. There was a clause in the lease against alienation, and the landlord gave him a new lease purporting to demise the dwelling-house. Now, because this man took out a new lease, Mr. Bailey decided that although the lease purported to demise the house, although the tenant had paid £275 practically for the house alone, under all the circumstances it was held that the buildings were the property of the landlord, and the rent must be charged upon them. That was simply because the tenant went on the technicality of surrendering one lease and taking out another, and simply because that was done his property was to be confiscated. He (Mr. Healy) could only say he thought it would be to the interest of all parties in Ireland that the law as regarded tenants' improvements should be put on a decent basis, and he had mentioned before, as a remarkable fact, that, by some curious circumstances, this question which arose in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" arose in a different way under the Crofters' Act; and while in every instance in Ireland the law was decided against the tenant, in every instance in Scotland it was decided in the tenant's favour. But that was not the sole grievance respecting improvements. Another remarkable decision was given recently in the case of a tenant named O'Neill, in the County Dublin. A clause in this man's lease, which was made since the Act of 1870, was to the effect that at the end of 31 years he was not to claim compensation for improvements under the Act of 1870. It was solemnly decided by the Sub-Commission, presided over by Mr. Kane, that because there was a provision in the lease that the tenant was not to claim compensation for improvements under the Act of 1870, the landlord was entitled to rent on these improvements, and though the tenant had put up buildings during the last 10 or 12 years to the extent of £1,600, which the landlord admitted to the full, yet the Court allowed rent on these very improvements. Was it reasonable that such a state of the law should continue? The worst of the matter was that these hardships and grievances were decided in a corner where nobody knew to any extent anything about them except a few lawyers in the Four Courts. The Sub-Commissioners operated in 32 counties. In many cases no report was furnished of the enormous hardships which were being done. These things were practically taking place in the dark, in a padded chamber, and no echo reached outside. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite would not contend for one moment that the law in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" was satisfactory; and, if it were unsatisfactory, was it not reasonable they should seek to change it? This decision affected millions' worth of property, and they asked that the law as regarded that property should be decided. If this property were the property of the landlord, it would be very quickly decided. They knew from the words of the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), now so fond of attacking them, that if the soil of Ireland were denuded of the tenants' improvements, it would be as naked as the American prairie. He (Mr. Healy) took from the House of Lords' Reports of last year the words of Earl Cowper, the appointee of Her Majesty's Government, who presided over the Commission, with which they (the Irish Members) had nothing to do. They had no Representative on that Commission. Their friends gave no evidence before that Commission—they left it severely alone, as if every one of its Members had got the plague; and notwithstanding that the only witnesses were witnesses not in sympathy with them, what was the solemn conclusion at which Lord Cowper arrived. He would quote from the report in *Hansard* of April 22, 1887—

> "With one or two exceptions, he (Earl Cowper) distinctly stated that, until very recently, landlords did not make improvements on the land, and when the tenants made them, the rents were immediately raised. He attributed the present condition of Ireland to the fact that the landlord class in Ireland—who, in other respects, were a most admirable race of men — had in many instances been undoubtedly bad landlords." — (3 *Hansard*, [313] 1596.)

He (Mr. Healy) did not know how a man could be, in other respects, an admirable man, if in regard to the chief matter in which he was allowed human power, enjoyment, and authority in the country, he was in the opinion of his own friends a bad man and a bad landlord. Lord Cowper was challenged as to his statement by an Irish landlord, Lord Belmore, on the 2nd May, 1887, after he had a full opportunity of reconsidering his words, and he reiterated them, as the report in *The Standard* showed. After using words similar to those he employed on the previous occasion, Lord Cowper went on to show how, while Irish tenants made all the improvements, they in England were done by the landlords, instancing a case where an owner of 70,000 acres in 22 years expended on the land and improvements £930,000. In face of these facts, he (Lord Cowper) thought he was justified in saying that, as a rule, the improvements were made in Ireland by the tenants, and in many cases the rents had been raised on such improvements. He (Mr. Healy) ventured to think the tenants' property in improvements in Ireland would not be represented by a sum of £150,000,000. Sir John Gray, in one of the debates following the Act of 1870, was of opinion that the Land Act of 1870 gave the tenants an interest equivalent to £100,000,000 in the soil, and taking into account the fall in prices, it was now a moderate estimate to say that £150,000,000 worth of property was at stake in this matter, that had been put in the land by the tenant, and to which the landlord had not contributed one farthing. Take the case of the Bath Estate, where the tenants' sweat had been coined into sovereigns for the benefit of the landlord. Under the Purchase Act, Lord Bath had sold his estate at Farney, the entire rent of which, whilst in the time of Queen Elizabeth it was only £200 a-year, had been increased to £40,000 at the time Mr. Godkin inquired into it; and he ventured to say that not £1,000 of the improvement had been made by the landlord in all that time. Landlords like the Governor General of Canada and the Countess of Kingston would say they had spent large sums of money in improving their estates; but their money was spent only on rent offices and gate lodges, and little or none of it on the real work of reclamation or improvement of land. The landlords said they borrowed money from the Board of Works for the purpose of making improvements, but if they did, they made the tenants pay for it. He had recently seen a notice of ejectment against a man whose rent was originally under £50; but the rent had by accumulated charges of £5 for title—such charges as these landlords were now crying out to have remitted to them, although they had put them all on to their tenants' rents—as well as £30 for drainage, and £20 for building and other charges, had been raised to about £120. It was a monstrous thing that they should allow the law on the subject of tenants' improvements in Ireland to be in such a condition that at one moment it was decided one way, and at another moment it was decided another way. He ventured to say that if the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland were asked for a statement as to the exact condition of the law in this respect, he would not be able to tell them with any sense of confidence. Nobody really knew what was the law in Ireland in regard to tenants' improvements; it was in a most miserable state; and if the Government did not like the mode of dealing with the matter proposed by the present Bill, which proceeded on the policy of the Act of 1881, he appealed to them to propose their own clauses for that purpose, and at any rate to place the law on a sure and sound basis. Then there was the question of the legal presumption as to improvements. The Act of 1870 did deal with that question to a certain extent; it made the presumption largely in favour of the tenant, but it did not go far enough, considering that the tenant was often an illiterate man, unable to read or to write, a fact which the Conservatives, although they had kept him thus ignorant for centuries, hurled at them as an argument of his unfitness for self-government. He was much less able to keep accounts in respect to his improvements in the same way as the landlord, who had a staff of clerks; and surely, therefore, knowing as they did from the Reports of the Devon and the Cowper Commissions that the tenant made the improvements, they ought to recognize them as such, and put the law on the subject on a just and proper foundation. The presumption ought to be made more largely in favour of the tenants. Pasture tenants, too, ought all to be admitted. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and his distinguished Relative the Prime Minister had continually stated on English platforms that every Irish tenant might enter the Land Court and might claim compensation for disturbance. A more hollow statement was never made, and the way to test that statement was to look at the figures. The exceptions contained in the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881 drove large holes in those Statutes. The right hon. Gentleman stated that all went into the Land Court who wished, and that those who did not go had fair rents. The case of the Government had been stated with an audacity which could only spring from that ignorance which was certainly the solid basis for most of the statements of the Chief Secretary in regard to Ireland. The Irish Members said that the tenants did not go into Court, because they were excepted from the provisions of the Act; and if the Government contested that assertion, let them bring the matter to the proof. There were about 600,000 tenants in Ireland, and out of that number only 200,000, or one-third of the entire body of tenants, had applied to the Court. It might be said that the other 400,000 could go into Court, too, if they liked; but out of the 200,000 who went into Court to have fair rents fixed, 36,000 had their applications dismissed or struck off. That was to say, those 36,000 had their applications dismissed as not being included in the Land Acts of 1870 or 1881. Was not that an extraordinary proportion to be hunted out of Court out of 200,000 who tried their luck, feeling confident that they had rights? Under such circumstances, they asked that the Legislature should deal with the excepted cases. He admitted that they mended their hand in last year's Bill on the subject of town parks and sub-letting, and he asked that they should now deal with the question of pasture holdings, which they had not touched at all. Almost the entire Province of Munster was pasture, and that was largely the case in Leinster and Connaught also. The Irish Members asked that pasture should be properly defined, and the whole question dealt with fairly. That Bill provided most moderately that—

"A holding was not to be excluded from the benefit of the Land Act if it should appear that such holding was originally laid down in pasture by the tenant or his predecessors."

All pasture holdings had not been excluded by the Act of 1881. The Act admittted those under £50 valuation which did not lie adjacent to the tenant's residence, this latter provision being a piece of legislative tomfoolery, by the way, such as that House was always sticking into Irish Acts, the Lord only knew why. It was yet an undecided question whether, if the man's valuation was £50, and that he lived solely by making butter and grazing, whether he would be excluded from the benefits of the Act of 1881. The Courts, it was true, had shrunk from so terrible a decision as to exclude him; but still the question was undecided, and the Government should deal with it. He could understand why the larger pasture holders had been excluded. That had been through the late Mr. Butt's influence in 1870, in consequence of the bitter feeling in the country against the large graziers who had assisted in the famine clearances of 1848. He (Mr. Healy) was, indeed, thankful to Providence that some of those large graziers, like Captain Pollok, of Galway, who held land that was uninhabited for miles and miles, and from which the people had been driven out like rats in 1848, now found these farms turning to moss on their hands, and that many of them were becoming, like Captain Pollok, broken and bankrupt. Captain Pollok had come to Ireland with £100,000, but he (Mr. Healy) did not suppose that he was now worth 100,000 farthings, nothwithstanding all his consolidations and clearances of the wretched Irish peasantry. He ventured to say that in this matter the present Bill, so far from representing the real justice of the case, was watered down a tenth remove from it. They had here also a definition of the word improvement. They went the revolutionary length of providing that an improvement was any agricultural operation on the holding that added to the letting value, or any expenditure of labour or capital which added to the letting value. Now, the definition of an improvement was as much in favour of the landlord as of the tenant, according to whoever made the improvement. It cut both ways. He hoped, under those circumstances, that the House would adopt the amendment of the law. They dealt with sub-letting on the same basis. As an illustration of how the law at present worked, he knew of the case of Captain Bolton, which came under his own knowledge within the last 12 years, where the Sub-Commissioners reduced the rent from £142 to £90; in other words, it was judicially found that the landlord had been robbing the tenant of £1 a-week. There was no question raised in the Court below as to any sub-letting point; but the landlord stated it upon appeal, and but that the tenant produced a letter dated in 1838 condoning the sub-letting, he would have lost the benefit of the Act. The late Mr. Law inserted the provision as to sub-letting in the Act of 1881 in the interest of the tenant. It was not in the Bill as it was originally introduced, nor as it passed through Committee. Well, he (Mr. Healy) begged of Mr. Law to withdraw the provision from the Bill; but he said he was putting in the provision in the interests of the tenants, because, according to the definition of "holding," any tenant who let the least bit of his land would be deprived of all the provisions of the measure; and, knowing the enormous sympathy of Mr. Law for the tenants and his enormous learning, they did not for a moment dispute the wisdom of introducing the provision, as he considered it would be in the interest of the tenant. But what happened? Its analogy in the Registration of Votes Act was applied to this agrarian legislation, and that unfortunately had been the use that had been made of the Sub-Letting Clause. But what injury was it to the landlord if a tenant let a bit of his land? If he did so, the landlord had his remedy against the head, and also the sub-tenant, and he would be in a position to eject both if the rent was not paid. Under those circumstances, they asked, whether, in cases where the sub-letting had been of a reasonable character, they should oust the tenant from the benefit of the Act. He must say he thought that if the House was inclined to act in a reasonable spirit, some of the provisions of the Bill would be accepted, and what they would say to the Government would be—"If you object to the Bill, but not as a whole, let it be read a second time, and then in Committee strike out or modify the provisions to which you object, but do not reject the whole Bill because you think that some of the provisions are unfair." They owed it to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that the stringency of the Act of 1881 had been mitigated; but tenancies were being continually broken down in the cases of old and aboriginal tenants; and therefore they provided, that with regard to any tenancy created before the 1st of January, 1886—and he thought that was a too moderate proposal—the tenant should have a right to go into Court. A tenant who had been evicted should be regarded as an old tenant, and should not be considered as a man put upon the basis of contract. In the next clause they followed the Crofters' Act, which reduced the period of statutory tenants from 15 years to seven. They were more moderate even than Lord Cowper, who proposed to make the judicial term five years. They asked that if seven years was considered fair for Scotland, why should not seven years be considered fair for Ireland also? The House found that the rents fixed from 1881 to 1885 were unfair, and declared that there should be a reduction; and now the Irish Members asked that the period of seven years should be put into this Bill, and under that basis, and with the new definition of improvement, they believed that some justice might be done for the tenants. The next provision dealt with the staying of payment of arrears, and some hon. Gentlemen considered that the central provision of the Bill. Some hon. Members had talked about the men who had got the arrears wiped out in 1882, that they should not again come into Court and get their arrears wiped out. But he (Mr. Healy) would point out that no such thing would have occurred if the rents fixed in 1881 and 1885 had not been rack-rents. To say that every spendthrift and dishonest tenant would get the benefit of the Act would be to write down every Irish Judge who dealt with these cases an ass, and to ignore the element of judicial discretion and determination. They found every day that the Chancery Judges were exercising their discretion; and, in his experience, they had fairly met the application of the tenants under them, and that exercise of discretion had been under judicial sanction and upon affidavit. But the Chancery Judges had only power to deal with estates that were rack-rented and encumbered, while previously they were bound, under the decision in "Hamilton *v.* Nagle," not to make the reduction if the owner objected. Under the Act of last year, the power of objecting had been taken out of the hands of the owner and placed in the hands of the Court alone; and if the House thought it just and fair to do that in the case of tenants under the Courts of Chancery, was it not equally fair to take out of the landlords' hands the power of objection in all cases? As regarded the rental of Ireland, the power which they claimed under that Bill was already in existence; and they now asked the House to give the County Court Judges and the Judge of the Superior Courts the very power which the House itself enacted in the important powers which they conferred upon the Chancery Judges in the Act of last year. That clause was given with the assent of the legal Representatives of Her Majesty's Government. Another consequence of the decision given by the Court of Appeal was this—that the reduction of rent in the way of wiping off arrears should not take place when the landlord objected. The Tory Party took away from the landlord that power of objection, and left it to the Land Judges in the Court of Chancery to make any reduction they pleased for the good of the estate. If Judges Monroe and Boyd were fit to be entrusted with that power, surely the late Colleagues of the Government—Judge Gibson and Judge Holmes—were fit to be entrusted with similar power, and all the Irish Party asked was the extension of the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery to the Common Law Courts under similar circumstances. Why should not the Irish tenant be treated with as much consideration as the Crofters in Scotland? When rent had been judicially reduced, would not the House take care that a tenant should not be reduced to the position of a caretaker by arrears? He now came to the provision dealing with the fatal 7th clause of the Act of 1887. He should say that he hardly believed that the Chief Secretary and the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) could scarcely have foreseen the operation of the clause under which eviction notices were sent out by post. It was operating largely in the case of leaseholders. The notices might or might not blossom into evictions; perhaps the Chief Secretary was right in anticipating that all would not do so, but many of them had already done their deadly work; they had put the leaseholders back to the *status* they occupied before the Act of 1887, and the landlord could refuse terms except on condition that the leases should be extinguished. If a tenant whose rent became due on the 1st of November received an originating notice on the 31st of October, that tenant, for an amount of arrears which did not exist, except as a legal fiction might lose his *status.* He (Mr. Healy) asked the Government to at least say that the fact of a tenant being served with a notice of eviction should not deprive him of having a fair rent fixed. It might be said, what good was it to the tenant to have a fair rent fixed if he could not pay up his arrears? The moment his rent was reduced, he could go to the bank or the terrible gombeen man, and, on the faith of the fixture of a fair rent, he could get sufficient money to wipe out his arrears. It was the knowledge on the part of the landlord that when a fair rent was once fixed, a man could either continue in his holding, or sell the tenant-right for its full value, which made the landlord so anxious to perform an operation that would destroy the tenant's *status.* And the unnecessary provision by which leaseholders were prevented from going into the Land Court was the one which compelled them to prove their title. Because leaseholders would not go to the heavy expense of getting the solicitor of the estate to make out their lease, they were to be deprived of the provisions of the Act of 1887. Why was it that it was made so difficult for tenants to get the benefit of good laws in Ireland? There were no exceptions of town-parks or grazing lands or leaseholders from the Crimes Act; it was only in the excellent legislation about which the Government boasted that these differences were made. Why should the Government leave these distinctions to be traded upon, as they said, by those who lived by agitation? Another provision they objected to was the one excluding leases for 999 years from the benefit of the Act. Because a tenant had a lease in perpetuity, he was to be robbed in perpetuity. Why, it was the leaseholders of that kind that needed the benefit of the Act. A man who held a lease for a short time had the hope of getting rid of it in a short time, but the man who held a lease for ever would never get rid of it. He thought it a great misfortune that a man should be denied the benefit of good laws because there happened to be an additional figure of 9 on his lease. The expenditure of a little ink in writing an additional 9 on a piece of parchment was the difference in Ireland between a pauper and a prosperous tenant. Absurdities of that kind should be avoided in legislation. The turbary question was an important one, and ought to be dealt with. With reference to the turbary clause, he would point out that landlords, the moment a tenant got a fair rent fixed, often tacked the difference between the fair rent and the old rent on to the bog. He (Mr. Healy) ventured to say that in the old grants given by the Crown these bogs were never included. They were the immemorial right of the tenants, and the landlords had afterwards craftily got possession of them by getting the tenants to give them acknowledgments of the bog and then putting on a rent of a penny a week for the turbary. In Ireland peat for fuel was a necessary of life, and this truth had been partially recognized in Deasy's Act and in the Act of 1881. The woods in Ireland had been destroyed, and therefore the people had only the bogs to supply them with fuel. Enormous injustice was done to the tenants by reason of the deprivation of bog, and it was reasonable to ask the House to deal with this question in the manner suggested. He would give an illustration of how the Court of Chancery could dispose of such matters. There was the case of a gentleman who had recently been appointed one of the Sub-Commissioners who appeared before the Court in respect to the sale of some property. On the title of the estate it was put down that the tenants had a right to the bog. Though it was proved the bog had been the tenants' for generations, and that they had never paid for it, this landlord commenced a suit, and what happened? Judge Monroe, instead of letting the brief of the tenant be opened, addressed the landlord to the following effect:—

> "My dear Sir, if this property were to be sold without the rights of the tenants to their bog being recognized upon it, the purchaser would only be buying a small civil war."

And Mr. Justice Monroe dismissed the Sub-Commissioner's application with costs. That was an instance of the summary way in which the Court of Chancery dealt with these pretensions of the landlords. Fortunately, a wise jurisdiction was exercised in that Court by the two gentlemen who presided over it, but unfortunately such cases seldom reached the ears of the public. The principles which guided the Court in cases such as that to which he had referred ought to receive general and undisputed recognition; and what they asked was that some provision of that kind in regard to rent should be recognized. The British Parliament by its legislation had made the Irish tenantry more easily "huntable," to use an expression applied by a German poet to the condition of the Irish people, than rabbits were by sportmen's ferrets. Legislation was passed upon the mere *ipse dixit* of a Gentleman sitting on the Treasury Bench, and the Irish Representatives were brought to Westminster to cry in vain in the ears of the Members of that House. He feared that this Bill could not hope for kindlier treatment from the author of the famous "pay or quit" declaration than its predecessors had received; but he warned the Government that the ghost of the measure would haunt them, and that the time would inevitably come when the principles which they now rejected would find a place upon their Statute Books. He appealed to the House, as the Bill was of such a moderate character, to agree to the Motion of his hon Friend.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said he willingly accepted the challenge thrown out by the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy) to state, on behalf of the Government, in detail as to each of the provisions of the Bill, the ground on which they suggested the rejection of the measure. He must say he thought the challenge the hon. and learned Member had thrown out was a more practical one than that of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis), who suggested that, as an occupant of the Treasury Bench, he should state the opinion of the Government as to the merits or demerits of the Irish land legislation commenced in 1881. It was rather remarkable that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. E. Ellis) threw out this challenge in the course of a speech in support of a measure which had been three times rejected by the authors of the legislation of 1881 as an unsettlement of that measure, and that in the same speech — and he (Mr. Madden) mentioned this as a tribute to the hon. Member's fairness and candour—he recalled to the recollection of the House what was undoubtedly a fact, namely, that in the year 1852 the Attorney General of the then Conservative Party introduced into the House a measure with which the hon. Member was evidently familiar, which went far in advance of any provisions which up to then had been submitted, in the direction of legislation for the relief of the tenants of Ireland, by any person occupying the position of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, then the Law Officer of the Crown. It would be admitted, however, that it was more practically useful to discuss the Bill before the House than the views and opinions of the Conservative Party on the course of legislation during past years. He was glad that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had recalled the attention of the House to the points upon which the decision of the House must be given. He (Mr. Madden) was the more glad because until the hon. and learned Gentleman addressed the House they had no such light on the matter. The hon. Gentleman who moved the second reading of the Bill had devoted a great deal of his attention to the perpetuity clause, and it was not a little remarkable that his advocacy of that clause seemed to be inspired chiefly by some views which he entertained with regard to the Trinity College tenants: That certainly was the main subject of the hon. Member's address to the House with reference to that clause. Well, he (Mr. Madden) would not go into the question of the Trinity College tenants now, for two reasons—first, because the time of the House was limited, and the question did not appear to be really pertinent to the important questions raised by the Bill; and, secondly, because there was another Bill before the House upon which the question could be more fully and conveniently discussed. He did not think a more infelicitous example could have been shown by the hon. Member, for the hon. Member had overlooked the fact that the great bulk of the Trinity College tenants were not occupying tenants, but middlemen; and that the settlement come to between the College and their tenants involved the principle of periodical re-adjustment of rents, therefore it was difficult to see why—unless it were for the purpose of making reference to Trinity College as a "close Corporation"—the hon. Member had devoted any time to the subject. Following the criticism of the Bill of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, he would take first the most important question—namely, that of improvements. The hon. and learned Gentleman had made a statement—and had made an appeal to him (Mr. Madden) in regard to that statement—in reference to the position of the law on the subject of improvements. The hon. and learned Member had stated that if a case were laid before a practising member of the Bar—and the hon. and learned Member had selected him (Mr. Madden) as the example—he would experience considerable difficulty in giving advice as to the exact state of the law. Well, the main difficulty in giving advice was generally in the application of the existing and the undoubted law to the particular facts of the case. They might make the law more simple — he was prepared to admit that this Bill, by removing all fair limitations and provisions in favour of the landlords, would probably simplify the law very much indeed, and any member of the Bar who had to advise under these circumstances would find it a very simple matter. But they must look beyond that, and he could not agree with the statement of the hon. and learned Member that, if they looked at the substance of the law in regard to improvements, there was any difficulty or injustice in the law as it at present existed. The hon. and learned Member had referred to the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath"—a case with which those interested in the administration of the law were very familiar. The facts of that case might be somewhat difficult, but the two principles of law, decided in two cases, to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred, stand out clearly. One was clearly decided in favour of the fair rights of the tenant, and the other, it appeared to him, with equal clearness and with similar fairness, in the direction of the rights of the landlord. The former of the two questions to which he referred was this—the question as to the position of the tenant in cases where improvements existed on the holding and where there had been a series of tenants. By the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," the strict legal interpretation which had been put on the words "predecessor in title" in the Act of 1870 was departed from. The decision in the case which arose under the Act of 1881 was entirely in favour of the tenant on that point.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Not altogether.

Mr. MADDEN said, the decision was entirely in favour of the tenant in respect of the point he was referring to. Of course he did not mean to say that it went so far in favour of the tenant as the hon. and learned Member would have it go. The decision got rid of a technicality which had been imported into the Act of 1870, and put—to use the language of Lord Chancellor Law, who was an eminent authority on that Act—a less technical interpretation on the term "predecessors in title," and adopted the principle that where there was a series of tenancies upon the land, each should be regarded as a predecessor in title to those who followed, although he might not have been predecessor in precisely the same title. But the Bill now before the House sought to go far beyond that. It sought to adopt the principle of predecessorship in occupancy, and that would include the case where a landlord had taken up the land, and perhaps farmed it for a time and then re-demised it with all the improvements. That seemed to him the most curious clause he had ever seen in a Bill of this kind. It provided that the expression "predecessors in title" should be construed to be "predecessors in occupancy," when it should appear to the Court that the justice of the case so required. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, that was all very well when they submitted for the decision of the Court a question involving a question of discretion or justice; but this was a question of general principle, which was not to be decided by what was just in an individual case; the question was as to the principle to be laid down—as to whether they were to go beyond the case of tenants who had made improvements, and a series of tenants who had done likewise. That was the question of principle to be decided by the House. He could not understand the demand for the recognition of the principle of succession of occupancy when they were dealing with the question of tenants' improvements, and they had already provided for the succession in title of a series of tenants when succeeding each other. The Crofters' Act had been referred to over and over again, but it was a most remarkable fact that if they looked at that Act they would find that in that Statute the term "predecessors in title" was limited to predecessors in title of the same family.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: That is because alienation is impossible. It is prohibited, and free sale does not exist.

Mr. MADDEN said, the point of his observation was that in Ireland the tenants had benefits which they could not have in Scotland. In Scotland, with regard to improvements, they could not look at the succession of tenancies generally, but the succession was limited to Members of the same family. The hon. and learned Member had referred to two cases as an illustration of what he called the unsatisfactory state of the law. Now it was remarkable that in one Sub-Commissioners' Court, presided over by Mr. Bailey, a decision was made with which the hon. and learned Gentleman said he should not agree——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No; I said, "with which I do not say that I agree."

Mr. MADDEN said, at any rate, if the head of that Sub-Commission had made an erroneous decision as to the law, it was easy to set it right. They could not easily lay down in a Bill a principle which was to guide them in dealing with every holding. Difficulties must crop up in individual cases. For one moment let him call the attention of the House to a rather important matter, which he did not think was very clearly brought out in the speeches which had come from the Opposition side of the House; he referred to the meaning of the term "improvement," and, as the time of the House was limited, he would not go into detail more than was absolutely necessary. He wished to point out that the importance of this Bill did not lie so much in the definition of the word "improvement" in the fifth clause as in the second clause, which dealt with the interest of the tenant in his improvements. Perhaps the House had not yet realized the extraordinary change in the law which that clause would effect. The clause provided that where—

> "Application has been made to the Court in the said Act mentioned to fix the fair rent of a holding, the Court shall ascertain whether any improvements have been made thereon by the tenant or his predecessors in title for which he or they have not been paid or otherwise compensated by the landlord or his predecessors in title, and shall estimate the extent of any increase in the letting value of the holding resulting from such improvements. Such increase in letting value shall, for the purposes of any such application, be deemed to be the property of the tenant, and no rent shall, in any proceedings under the said Act or this Act, be allowed or made payable in respect thereof."

Now, be that right or be it wrong, under the shelter of the not quite so formidable definition clause, a total and absolute change in the law as to tenants' property in improvement was introduced by this section; and he would endeavour to explain what he meant. The first of the questions—the one which had been discussed—was whether, in the construction of the existing Acts, the "improvement" meant the works done by the tenant, in the carrying out of which he had spent his money, and the effect of which had been to add to the letting value of the holding on the increased value which was the result of those works. The second of the questions decided is the case to which the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy) referred. As the former question to which he had referred had been clearly decided in favour of the tenant, so as regards the latter question with equal clearness a decision had been given in favour of the landlord. The making of an improvement was one thing. It cost the tenant money, or time, or labour—it cost something which might be the subject-matter of compensation, and that it should be the subject-matter of compensation had been long ago admitted. The increased letting value was a totally different thing. Whilst the increased letting value depended in part, no doubt, upon that expenditure of money, it depended in part also upon the capability of the thing improved, and that capability was the property of the landlord. ["No, no!"] He supposed hon. Members opposite would admit that before the tenant carried out improvements the landlord had the property which was capable of benefiting by the improvement, and could himself have carried out the improvements and realized benefit from them. He would quote the opinion of an eminent authority, which hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House as well as hon. Members on the other side of the House respected. Mr. Isaac Butt, in dealing with the question, made an observation which would show to those who accepted it that such a settlement as that proposed in the present Bill would be unjust—namely, the definition of the increased value, instead of the thing done as being the improvement. Mr. Butt had said—

> "The additional value is not the creation solely of the tenant. It is the creation partly of the expenditure of the skill of the tenant and partly of the inherent capability of the soil."

Mr. Butt had pointed out cases in illustration of this contention, and had gone on to say—

> "These powers of the soil were the property of the landlord, and he has the right to have them returned to him when the tenant's interest expires. He has not the right, however, to appropriate the expenditure which the tenant has incurred in making them productive."

That was the foundation of the law as it existed at present. The tenant had no right to say that the increased value of the land was his. That was the doctrine laid down; but this principle would be reversed by the 2nd clause of the Bill. The entire increased value of the holding was to be made the property of the tenant totally irrespective of whether it was due to the expenditure of money or to the capabilities of the soil which was the property of the landlord. That he looked upon as one of the most objectionable features of the Bill. He asked the House if it was correct to describe this Bill as having for its object to do away with pitfalls that had been detected in the work of the Legislature. He could understand a measure being brought forward to supply deficiencies of that kind, and to correct matters which were not foreseen by the Legislature, but this was not such a measure. The provisions of the Bill were matters of principle which had been discussed in that House over and over again; and, in substance, the House had had the Bill before it on many occasions. It had been made the subject of Divisions, and had frequently been pronounced against by the House. Of course it was impossible to prevent difficulties arising under the best drawn Act of Parliament, but this was the class of questions with which the Bill dealt. With reference to the Improvements Clause of the Bill, the only other remark he had to make was that the third section appeared to him to be extremely unjust with regard to the presumption which it created as to improvements executed in the last 50 years. The presumption which at present existed was extremely fair and equitable to the tenant, but under this section of the Bill they would have to go back for an unreasonable time, and prove that the work had been done by the landlord. The hon. and learned Member had mentioned the provision under the law which now existed that the enjoyment by the tenant of his improvements might be had regard to by the Court in fixing the amount of compensation. That he held to be a provision eminently fair. But how did the Bill deal with this subject? No matter whether the landlord and the tenant had dealt together on the basis of the improvements, no matter what forbearance had been shown, and no matter what the arrangement between the landlord and the tenant might be, an express contract must be produced or the matter was not to be considered. He submitted that it was more fair and equitable to leave the question to the consideration of the Court than to lay down a hard and fast rule, and that the decision previously come to over and over again by the House on this question was just and fair. This part of the measure reversed the present law in a manner that was exceedingly unjust to the landlords. The next point of the hon. and learned Member was the question of the exemption of pasture land. There was no general exemption in the case of pasture land under the Act of 1881, which provided that the land must have been let wholly or mainly for the purpose of pasture, and that the holding must be valued at not less than £50. The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to the provision relating to pasture lands adjoining the farm on which the tenant resided as nonsensical, but it seemed to him, on the contrary, eminently fair and sensible. The Act was intended to apply to the ordinary class of occupying tenants who resided on their holdings, and was not intended for the protection of those who entered into large grazing speculations. But the class of cases to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred was not so numerous as the House might be led to suppose. The hon. and learned Member had stated that of the 500,000 or 600,000 tenants in Ireland, about 200,000, less a certain number of cases that were dismissed, had had fair rents fixed, and that of the remaining 400,000 a large number were kept out of Court by the fact that they were pastoral tenants—tenants of demesnes or otherwise exempted. He did not think that statement consistent with what was generally said on the subject, and he would remind hon. Members opposite that the statement had been over and over again made in that House that it was the large amount of arrears that prevented tenants going into the Land Court. Another question with which the Bill proposed to deal was that which, it seemed to him, had been already provided for by existing legislation—namely, the question of sub-letting. No doubt the original Act of 1881 was intended for the benefit of occupying tenants, and the clause which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred to had the effect of excluding certain cases where there had been sub-letting of a trivial character; but what was done last year? The Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1887 contained a clause which appeared to him to remove the difficulty and to do away with the two cases where the former Act might work injustice. In the first place, it exempted from exclusion cases of sub-letting where the tenant was a *bonâ fide* labourer on the holding; and, in the second place, cases where the amount of sub-letting was so trivial that the Court deemed the tenant in substantial occupation of the holding. Surely, the hon. and learned Gentleman did not contend that where a man was not substantially in occupation of the holding he should be admitted to the benefit of the Act? He submitted that it was only where the Court declared that a tenant was substantially in the occupation of the holding that he was entitled to the benefit of the Act; and, therefore, the object of this part of the Bill had, in his opinion, been attained. The next provision of the Bill was with regard to future tenancies, and was of a very anomalous character. He could understand the provisions of the Act of 1881 on this point; but he could not understand admitting the distinction between present and future tenancies, and adopting the arbitrary point of time suggested by the Bill. Then as to the suggested limitation of the terms of the judicial tenancy to seven years, the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to it as a more moderate proposal than that of the Cowper Commission, but there was an essential difference. As he understood the Bill, all questions relating to the tenancy must be re-opened and gone through at the end of seven years. But the Cowper Commission suggested nothing of that kind. Their recommendation was an entirely different one—namely, that there should be no entire re-opening of the whole case, but only a sort of automatic adjustment of rent, which was a much less objectionable proposal. As to the matter of staying evictions, that matter had been the subject of the most careful legislation already, and the existing provisions were, he considered, just and liberal to the tenants. The Courts had power to stay proceedings for ejectment, pending the fixing of judicial rents, and there appeared to him no necessity whatever for further legislation on the subject. With regard to arrears, he was aware that there was no power to deal with them except by spreading them over a certain period by instalments. It was stated by the hon. and learned Member that this provision of the Bill had been taken from the Crofters' Act; but although it might have been copied from that Act, it was now applied to a case entirely dissimilar. The Crofters' Act dealt with primary applications for fair rents, but this Bill dealt indiscriminately with various classes of tenants, whether tenants under lease, tenants who took the benefit of the Arrears Act of 1882, or tenants who might have had fair rents fixed years ago. A clause of this kind, as applied to the tenants of all those classes, had absolutely no resemblance to the Crofters' Act. The hon. and learned Member had referred to a clause which was introduced into the Act of 1887. It was perfectly true, as the hon. and learned Gentleman said, that the Chancery Judges, in dealing with the estates of minors and lunatics, had power to remit arrears. But the Court of Chancery in dealing with such estates acted as the owner of them; it did what the owner might do, and what the vast majority of landlords in Ireland were doing. The Act of last year merely placed the Land Judges, when an order had been made for sale and a receiver had been appointed, in the position which the Judge of the Court of Chancery had always held when acting for minors and lunatics, and enabled them to make abatements of rent. With reference to turbary, a more extraordinary provision had never been submitted to the House than that contained in this Bill—namely, that what was called the reasonable expectation of the tenants, the licences and usages which they enjoyed as a matter of favour, should be converted into a matter of legal right against the landlord. He was far from saying that the question of turbary was not a difficult one, but the Government could not accept a provision which converted what were called privileges by custom, but which were not rights in any proper sense of the term, into legal rights. The question of perpetuity holdings had been fully discussed and decided last year, and what reason had the hon. and learned Member given for going behind that decision? The hon. and learned Member asked what magic there was in the number 999. But where a line has to be drawn it must be drawn somewhere, and you must draw it at some definite point with regard to tenancies which are within or without the scope of the Acts. He submitted that no grounds had been laid before the House sufficient to induce it to depart from the decision arrived at last year. This Bill had a long Parliamentary history. It was brought forward in substance in 1882, and was then opposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). It was again opposed by him in 1883 and 1884, and he asked what prospect there was held out that if the House in 1888 were to adopt its provisions it would be regarded as a final settlement of the land question in Ireland. It was admitted that it would be only a new unsettlement. The mover of the Bill did not claim finality for it, and one of his supporters had declared that the real question underlying it was the question of real property in what was called rent. Therefore, seeing that the Bill was not proposed as a settlement of the question, and that its provisions were neither just nor fair, he would ask the House to reject the Motion for its second reading.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, the hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) had quoted a number of statistics, and shown that there was only one farmer who emigrated from Ireland for 10 labourers. He would point out it was the farmers' sons who went away, and that the farmers, who were generally old men, were those who remained. This Bill might be called an omnibus Bill, and he was going to vote for its second reading, although by that he did not intend to commit himself to the details of every clause. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had said they must draw a line somewhere with regard to leaseholders, but he wanted it to be drawn nowhere. Last year, when perpetuity and long leaseholders were shut out from the Bill of the Government, there was an understanding that a Bill would be introduced by which these tenants were to purchase the fee-simple of their holdings. New they had heard nothing of that Bill. Seeing that the Government were not prepared to deal with this matter in the way they practically undertook to deal with it, he thought they might, at all events, bring the long leaseholders under Lord Ashbourne's Act, and enable them to compulsorily buy the fee simple of their holdings. The other point he wished to touch upon was the question of arrears. There were four classes of arrears which the House ought to consider. He did not deny that what were called bogus arrears existed, but he wanted to know what was the use of a Judge with a discretion vested in him if he was not able to find out whether the plea of inabilty to pay was real or a sham. He thought that was a question which must be left to the Irish Judges, who were acquainted with the state of the country. The next class of arrears were those which had accumulated under the Plan of Campaign. He thought these were entitled to different treatment from that of the ordinary class of arrears with which he proposed to deal, but they would have to be dealt with in some way or other. It was quite clear that the landlords could get none of these until they came to terms, and it was for their interest that this question should be settled. The tenants now going into Court for the first time were getting reductions of rent to the extent of 30, 40, and 50 per cent. If that was so, the rents could not possibly be fair, and if arrears had accumulated in consequence—the tenants were entitled to relief. It was an erroneous impression that it was desired that these arrears should be swept away. All he had asked in the Bill which he had introduced was that the County Court Judge should have discretion to deal with them—to wipe them out or reduce them, in the same way as the Judges of the Landed Estates Court had power to do at the present moment. The Solicitor General for Ireland had impressed upon the House that the Judge of the Landed Estates Court practically took the place of the owner. But he would call attention to a case decided last week by Mr. Justice Monroe. The owner had consented to the reduction of rent, but refused to consent to the reduction of the arrears, and the Judge then swept them away entirely, saying that it was not of the slightest use to continue the arrears in the case of these small holdings. Having worked for years with the Ulster tenant farmers, he knew that the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" was felt to be a heavy burden, and in his opinion rightly, the tenants being under the impression that they were rented on their improvements, and that the Court of Appeal had decided that this was right. He had been struck with the discussion of that morning. He believed in his heart that the Irish Question was much more economic than political in its character, and he likewise believed that the Land Question was at the root of the Irish problem. He did not know how long it would take to carry the provisions of this Bill, or how many years they might spend in passing the Bill through the House clause by clause; but he was certain that in substance it would be ultimately carried, and that until it was carried the peace of Ireland would not be secured.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that the legal aspects of the question raised by the Bill had been so powerfully and so exhaustively presented in the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) that he should attempt to add nothing to his argument. The point upon which he wished to make a single remark was the extraordinary position of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) took up, in supposing that he could get rid of the question of arrears by saying that the Government could not approve of the clauses of the Bill. Surely the hon. and learned Solicitor General forgot that the Government induced the House three weeks ago—at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain)—to pass an Amendment accepting a proposition which virtually committed both the Government and the House to the admission that there was a case for dealing with arrears. The hon. Member for North Antrim did not object to the arrears clauses of the Bill because they would inflict monetary loss on the landlords, but because of their moral effect on the Irish tenants. He did not doubt that the hon. Member, like other hon. Members on his side of the House, voted for the Amendment of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and by so doing committed himself to the proposition that there was an arrears question, and that the tenants were in urgent need of a proposal for dealing with arrears of rent. He (Mr. John Morley) would point out that nearly every set of provisions of the Bill received their support that day and got authority quite outside the ranks of the Nationalist Members for Ireland as much as from within those ranks. The turbary clause was taken from the Bill of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), and the clause reducing the statutory term was supported by the Cowper Commission. Though the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had demurred to there being any parallel between the claims of the Scotch Crofters' Act and the application of similar clauses in Ireland, he would remind him that no less a powerful supporter of his Government than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham expressly stated that in his view the clauses of the Crofters' Act of 1886 furnished an exact precedent upon which they might wisely go in dealing with arrears of rent in Ireland. He (Mr. John Morley) submitted that the House was asked to reject propositions for the welfare of the Irish tenants which were not propounded merely by Members of the Nationalist Party, but which received support from authorities of the utmost diversity of opinion, but all agreeing in this, and all differing from Her Majesty's Government in this, that they knew the conditions of the case in Ireland, and that Her Majesty's Government either did not know them or else made it a point of honour to ignore, and behaving as if they were not worth a moment's consideration.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I must say I listened to the right hon. Gentleman's remarks with the greatest surprise. He gave the House to understand that this was a Bill which the Government were going to reject against the wishes, not merely of the hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway, but against the wishes of all land reformers who have given attention to the subject, whatever Party they belong to. Precisely the reverse of that statement is the fact. Every one of the important provisions of the Bill has been discussed in the House, and has been brought under the consideration of the Front Opposition Bench—has been commented upon by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and has been rejected by the House on its merits, chiefly in consequence of the arguments advanced by those right hon. Gentlemen.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): The arrears clause was never brought forward at all, and it is one of the most important.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I absolutely differ from the hon. Gentleman in thinking the arrears clause the most important.

Mr. PARNELL: I said one of the most important.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) stated that we who voted in the majority three weeks ago on the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork committed ourselves, by voting for the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Birmingham (Mr. Powell-Williams) to the proposition that there was an important arrears question remaining to be dealt with in Ireland. If that be so—and I do not argue the point—the arrears question in Ireland would not be dealt with by the proposition which is now laid before the House. What does the arrears question in Ireland arise from? It is stated to have arisen from the fact that in a large number of cases judicial rents were fixed before the fall of prices; that in consequence of the fall of prices those judicial rents became impossible; that in consequence of the judicial rents becoming impossible arrears accumulated; and that in consequence of the accumulation of arrears tenants were turned out of their holdings. Sir, not a single tenant who ever went into the Land Court to get a fair rent fixed under the Act of 1881 would obtain the slightest fragment of relief by the proposition which is now seriously put before the House; and consequently this Bill is no solution of the arrears question in Ireland. So much for the question of arrears. But the most important proposition in this Bill was not alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. The right hon. Gentleman said that the proposals of the Bill were supported from outside the Irish Party. I ask him whether a single Member outside the Irish Party except one—the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis)—is seriously prepared to go into the Lobby and to vote for a Bill which reduces the interest of the landlord to what is known as "prairie value." If you take the second and fourth clauses of this Bill in combination, as was pointed out with unanswerable force by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) in 1884, you absolutely deprive the landlord of everything but prairie value. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) gave us a case of Lord Bath's property, which he said was worth nothing when it came to Lord Bath, but which had been sold to the tenants, and was now worth £40,000 a-year. The contention is that the whole of that £40,000 annual value was conferred upon the land by the tenants. Work that to its logical conclusion, and it is perfectly clear that Lord Bath had no legitimate property interest in the land at all.

Mr. PARNELL: There is a limit of 50 years in the Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: But observe, that if you once admit the principle how far it may go. Is this Bill regarded as final by the Irish Party who bring it forward in this House? The hon. and learned Member for North Longford described it as a "watered down tenth of what was required," in the hope that it may be allowed to pass. Therefore we know that it is merely regarded as an instalment, and that if it were adopted hon. Gentlemen would come next year or the year after and tell us that the Land Question was still unsettled, and that if we would only make a further advance upon the principles which we had accepted, then the Irish tenantry would be at last contented. The result will be that even if we pass this measure, the question will still remain unsettled. Now, I do not wish to argue the question of property in land; but it is perfectly clear that if you are to cut down the landlords' interest in land to the original value of the soil, unimproved by the tenant and unaffected by the progress of society, you would destroy at one sweep every atom of property in land throughout the Three Kingdoms. Is that principle accepted by any Gentleman outside the Irish Party? I do not think that any hon. Member outside the Irish Party will desire to see such a result as that brought about. Does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle accept it? The right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow four years ago denounced such a proposal, and I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman's conversion has reached such a point that he now repudiates all arguments which he had himself advanced at such a recent period. There is a proposition in this Bill which entirely removes all the restrictions upon sub-letting. Does that meet the approval of hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway? Does not everyone who knows anything about the Irish Question know—this that half the difficulty and half the evil which Ireland suffers from in the West and South-West arises from reckless sub-division? Is the House prepared, after removing every inequitable provision against sub-letting, to remove every equitable provision? Then we come to the reduction of the judicial term. It has been contended that half the difficulties and evils under which Ireland suffers would be removed if the judicial rents were to be revised every seven instead of every 15 years; but although, if the original Land Act were now before the House, I might prefer to see the period of the fixed rents shortened from 15 to seven years, I do not think that by shortening the period now the evils under which the Irish tenants are suffering will be mitigated in any great degree. Seven years only have elapsed since the Act of 1881 was passed; precisely the period, therefore, which the hon. Gentleman now advocates. But long before ever five years had passed, did not he and his friends begin shouting out that it was impossible to pay judicial rents? Is it not, therefore, a farce to suggest that a change of period from 15 to seven years is a true solution of the difficulty? The way to deal with it is, not by shortening the term, but by trying to find some expedient by which rent may be made to bear a proportion to the price of products. I will not dwell upon the question of future tenancies, but I will point out that if you abolish them by this Bill you will give up the last fragment of hope which was held out to us by the framers of the Act of 1881, that free contract should some day or other be restored to Ireland. For my part, I am unwilling to give up that hope, and I will not be a party to a Bill which cuts away the last chance of that hope being fulfilled.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: What about perpetuity leases?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. Friend reminds me that I have not alluded to the question of perpetuity. Well, that question was raised at great length last year, and I have nothing to add to the arguments which I then had the honour to address to the House. But I will sum them up in one sentence—we were prepared to release leaseholders, but we were not prepared to release people who were in effect proprietors. We were not prepared to draw a distinction between a man who had practically become a freeholder at a permanent rent, and a man who bought his estate with borrowed money. We regarded a man who had purchased a lease for 999 years as practically a purchaser, and we no more saw our way to relieving him than the unfortunate purchaser in the period of high prices, 15 years ago, who now finds that he made an extremely bad bargain. In addition to the objections to almost every provision in the Bill, there is a grave objection to re-opening this year, and every year, the great question of land in Ireland, and to convincing every landlord and every tenant, every man who lends, and every man who borrows money on land in Ireland, that finality in dealing with Irish land is beyond the hope of the sanguine political prophet.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he felt bound to meet the charges of inconsistency which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had brought against him in reference to this subject. The right hon. Gentleman, in three very pointed references to him, said he had before opposed every provision of this Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he only referred to the question of improvements.

Mr. PARNELL: He said opposed to all the most important provisions.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, there was no doubt the late Government, in which he had had the honour of serving, endeavoured as long as possible to maintain the settlement of 1881; but they were driven from that by the course of circumstances and by bad seasons and by the state of Ireland. But hon. Gentlemen opposite had themselves upset the settlement of 1881, because they had been compelled last year to extend the benefits of that Act to most leaseholders. What was desired under this Bill was to extend it to all. The Party opposite had reduced the judicial rents. The supporters of the Bill wished to reduce those rents at shorter intervals. They did not pledge themselves to every part of the Bill, which would require to be looked into in Committee. For his part, he should require to look very closely into the 2nd and 3rd clauses before he could consent to the Bill as a whole. They supported the Bill mainly on account of the Arrears Clause, the arrears question being the main cause of the present miseries of Ireland. In doing so they were not inconsistent. In 1882 they introduced an Arrears Bill for the purpose of enabling all the tenants of Ireland to take advantage of the Land Act of 1881, and they now called upon the House of Commons to consent to this as an Arrears Bill, in order that all the tenants of Ireland might be able to take advantage of the Land Acts of 1881 and 1887. It was for that purpose that he, for his part, would vote for this Bill, and he maintained that in doing so he was not inconsistent, but consistent with the policy of the Liberal Party ever since the Act of 1881 with regard to land in Ireland, which was to give to the tenant in fulness and completeness those rights in his holding which he and his predecessors had morally but which they never had legally till now.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, because the Bill dealt with the grievance that rent was charged in Ireland on tenants' improvements he was prepared to vote for this Bill. He could not approve of it in its present form; far from it, but he should support the present Motion, because the Bill dealt with the question of improvements, and because its effect would be very largely to reverse the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." It was the opinion of many hon. Members that the decision of the Irish Court reversed the express intention of the Legislature in passing the Act of 1881. He was glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in his place, because he would, no doubt, confirm the statement that the operation of the Act in this respect had been very different from the intention of Parliament. He trusted that the House would send the Bill into Committee, and, as was very necessary, amend it when it got there.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 190; Noes 247: Majority 57.

Sir George Trevelyan

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Barry, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Commins, A.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Davies, W.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dodds, J.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, rt. hn. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Gully, W. C.
Harrington, E.
Harrington, T. C.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, T. M.
Howell, G.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, M. J.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Lea, T.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
Mac Innes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Lagan, P.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Marum, E. M.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Kelly, J.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.

Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Potter, T. B.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Pyne, J. D.
Quinn, T.
Randell, D.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Roe, T.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, T. W.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheehy, D.
Simon, Sir J.
Sinclair, W. P.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Blane, A.
Ellis, J. E.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beaumont, H. F.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brown, A. H.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, G. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, Sir W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Fielden, T.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gedge, S.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Green, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, H. L.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Raikes, right hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.

Rasch, Major F. C.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Russell, Sir G.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stephens, H. C
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wilson, Sir S.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *put off* for six months.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.—[Bill 61.]

(*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richard, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. William Abraham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, that the Leader of the House had promised to take into consideration the desirableness of sending this Bill, together with the Intermediate Education (Wales) (No. 2) Bill, to a Select Committee after they had been read a second time. In these circumstances, he would postpone moving the second reading for the present.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Monday* next.

QUESTIONS.

——o——

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, that as the Local Government Bill was fixed for a second reading to-morrow, he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he would consent to take the debate on Government nights only? Such an arrangement would be the most convenient to Members and the country generally, as it would enable them to communicate with their constituents during the progress of the debate.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I desire, of course, to consult, as far as possible, the convenience of hon. Members on both sides of the House in this matter; but when this subject was mentioned before the holidays, I stated, with the concurrence, as I understood, of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, that as there appeared to be no opposition to the principle of the Bill, and that as its principle was received generally in the country with approval, that I thought it was desirable that we should lose as little time as possible in getting into Committee on the measure. I cannot, therefore, undertake to accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for West Bradford, because it would obviously delay the progress of the Bill for a fortnight and interfere with the progress of Public Business. I should be exceedingly sorry to put any undue limit on the discussion of a Bill of this importance; but, following the precedent adopted when a Bill of great importance is being considered by the House, it appears to me desirable that we should invite the House to consider the Bill from day to day on the second reading, until that stage is disposed of. After that there will be an interval before the House goes into Committee on the measure, and then I hope that the House will consider it in a fair and reasonable manner, there being every indication of a desire on both sides to treat it not as a Party measure.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): As the right hon. Gentleman has referred either to a gesture or a sentence of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), perhaps I may be allowed to say that, from what has since come to his knowledge as to the state of feeling and opinion on the subject, my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian no longer holds the opinion, or entertains the hope, that the debate on the second reading can possibly be concluded in the short space of two nights; and probably the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House himself feels that that would be an impossibility. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman does not see his way to accept the suggestion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Illingworth), and that he does not recognize that the discussion from day to day of so complex a Bill as this must be much less satisfactory than such a distribution of the debate as would allow of intervals between the daily discussion; but I would support my hon. Friend in what he said, and express the hope that the right hon. Gentleman may still see his way to agree to such an arrangement.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said, he thought that the suggestion of the hon. Member for West Bradford, if adopted, would tend to shorten the discussion on the second reading.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he supported the appeal made by the hon. Member for West Bradford to the First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: If the proposal made to us were acted upon, no other Government Business, practically, could be taken for a week or a fortnight, and the result would be that the Budget proposals of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer must be delayed, and the interests of the Revenue would suffer a loss.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked, whether there would be a Morning Sitting on Friday?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: My hon. Friend behind me, who has the only Motion down on the Paper for Friday evening, has offered to give way; and, therefore, there will be no necessity for a Morning Sitting on that day.

MOTIONS.

HABITUAL DRUNKARDS ACT (1879) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend "The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879," *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Trevor Lawrence, and Sir Walter Foster.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 203.]

ARMY ESTIMATES.

Ordered, That the Reports and Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Army and Navy Estimates of last Session be referred to the Select Committee on Army Estimates.—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

House adjourned at one minute before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 12th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees—House of Commons (Admission of Strangers), Sir Wilfrid Lawson *disch.*; Mr. Lawson *added*; Pilotage, Dr. Fox *added*.

Supply—*considered in Committee — Postponed Resolutions* [April 9] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Marriages of Nonconformists (Attendance of Registrars) (No. 2)* [205]; Partnership* [206]; Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Amendment)* [207].

First Reading—Excise Duties (Local Purposes)* [204].

Second Reading—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*First Night*], *debate adjourned.*

Third Reading—Customs, Isle of Man* [195], and *passed.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT 1887 (CONVICTION OF MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN AFFIRMED).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter relating to the conviction of a Member of this House:—

Kilkenny,
April 10th, 1888.

Sir,

I have to inform you that an Appeal by Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Member for Monaghan, against a Conviction by Magistrates, under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," sentencing him to three months' imprisonment, was this day heard by me. The Appeal was dismissed, and the Conviction affirmed.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
T. de Moleyns,
County Court Judge of Kilkenny.

To the Right Honble. the Speaker,
&c., &c., &c.

QUESTIONS.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1884.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Scottish Trustees can take advantage of Clause 27 of the National Debt Conversion Act, and legally invest the proceeds arising from the sale under that clause of Stock held by them in securities authorized by the Trusts (Scotland) Act, 1884?"

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) asked the hon. Member to address the Question to the Lord Advocate.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I will answer it to-morrow.

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICES—MONACO.

Colonel HAMBRO (Dorset, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If, in response to the application of the numerous British residents in the Principality of Monaco, a Representative of Her Majesty's Government will be appointed to that State?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Arrangements are being made for Consular representation in Monaco.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS FOR THE BALTINGLASS UNION.

Mr. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the statement in *The Leinster Leader* of the 7th instant, in reference to the recent election of Guardians for the Baltinglass Union, that an ex-Guardian and a candidate, W. R. Douglas, commanded the rate collector, Mr. Driver, to put a false date to a receipt for rates, in order to give a qualification to one John Plant, in the following terms:—

"Confidential.

"5th March, 1888.

"Dear Mr. Driver,

"John Plant, of Ballyhubbock, has been nominated (in case Mr. Wynne succeeds in Stratford). See that his receipt for the Eadestown rates is dated 3rd March. The money is ready any time you call for it.

'Mr. Dennis asked me this morning to write to you about it.

"Yours very truly,
"W. R. Douglas."

whether the Mr. Dennis referred to is Mr. E. A. Dennis, the present Chairman of the Baltinglass Board of Guardians; and, whether he will order an inquiry into the facts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was informed no such letter was received by the rate collector referred to.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman able to state the letter was not written?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I am not able to state that.

Mr. CLANCY asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether he would order a sworn inquiry into the circumstances, especially as an offer had been made to prove the genuineness of the letter at such inquiry, and that the offer had been rejected by the man incriminated.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he understood there was no letter of the character referred to in the Question at all received by the person mentioned.

Mr. CLANCY: I must press this matter a little further, as it is most important. An allegation has been made that this letter was written, and it was not delivered because it was intercepted. An offer was made to establish its genuineness at a sworn inquiry, and the offer was rejected by a majority of the Baltinglass Guardians at the suggestion of the person incriminated.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR did not reply.

LOTTERY ACTS—CONFECTIONERS' PACKETS OF SWEETS.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware of the practice which obtains in some large towns of confectioners selling parcels of sweets to children, some few of which contain money, thereby encouraging a spirit of gambling among young children; whether he will take steps to enforce any provisions of the existing law which condemns such practice; and, whether he will introduce a Bill to punish not only the retailers, but also the makers and wholesale dealers of such packages?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have called for, and have received, Returns on this subject from Birmingham, Nottingham, Sunderland, and York—the places named in the letter addressed to me by the hon. Member. In three of those places proceedings have been taken under the Lotteries Act, with the view of checking or preventing the practice complained of. At York, the Chief Constable cannot ascertain that the law has been infringed. I think that the law, as it stands, gives sufficient power to the Local Authorities to deal with any real gambling; and if any instances of the law being evaded, or of the Local Authorities not taking action, are brought to my notice, I will do what I can to secure the observance of the law.

ARMY (INDIA)—ARMS OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to a statement which has appeared recently in an Indian newspaper, alleging that the whole Royal Artillery in India, both Horse and Field, are still only armed with the obsolete 9-pounder field gun; whether this statement is correct; and, if so, how far; whether he can hold out to the House any hopes that this state of things will be amended at an early date; and, whether he can, with due regard to public expediency, indicate to the House any approximate date at which our Artillery in India may be expected to be put into a state of efficiency for field service, by being armed with a more modern field gun?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) (who replied) said: Three batteries armed with 12-pounder breech-loading field guns have been sent to India, and six more will be sent this year. The time within which the new guns can be supplied to the whole of the batteries in India depends, as I explained on May 23, 1887, on financial and other considerations.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN gave Notice that, inasmuch as he regarded the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman as not wholly satisfactory, he should, if the matter were not settled in the meantime, call attention to it on the Indian Budget.

EGYPTIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, How the Egyptian General Assembly, which was convoked for the 24th of December last, was constituted, whether by nomination or election; how far in this matter the decrees consequent on the Earl of Dufferin's recommendation have been carried out, how far left in abeyance; if there has been any sort of election to the General Assembly, how it was carried out; and, whether any Reports on the subject are available?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The constitution of the General Assembly is described briefly in Sir Edward Malet's despatch of September 7, 1883 (Egypt, No. 1, 1884, page 28). The elective Members are elected for a period of six years. The elections took place in 1883. Some account of the proceedings will be found at pages 21, 31, and 34 of the same Blue Book. A complete list of the Assembly is given at pages 113 and 114. It met in September, 1885, to consider Colonel Moncrieff's projects of irrigation, and has not been convoked since until the recent occasion.

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS — TENDERS FOR IRONMONGERY AND CUTLERY.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether, in the advertisements for tenders for ironmongery and cutlery stores for the Navy, it is announced that forms of tender and patterns will be shown in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Sheffield, Dudley, and Wolverhampton, but not in any town in Scotland; and, whether he will favourably consider the claim of manufacturers in the West of Scotland, that forms of tender and pattern should also be on view in Glasgow?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): There are two sets of patterns; one of them is always on view at the pattern room in London, where many firms prefer to see them, and the other is exhibited at the centre of the trade concerned. Thus, hardware patterns are on view in

Birmingham or Wolverhampton; cutlery at Sheffield; glass at Dudley; carpets at Kidderminster; textile goods at Dundee; and so on. It is impossible to do more without incurring very heavy expense, amounting to thousands of pounds, in providing additional sets of patterns. Glasgow, although a large centre of industry, can hardly be regarded as a headquarters of the trade in any one of the class of articles asked for; although, perhaps, it has greater claims for the exhibition of black ironmongery and gun-metal ships' fittings, in which it does a very considerable business, than for other articles. If, as elsewhere is usually the case, the Chamber of Commerce will provide accommodation for such patterns as may be sent to Glasgow and undertake their charge and exhibition free of expense, arrangements might be made to show some patterns occasionally at Glasgow. If the Chamber of Commerce will place themselves in communication with me, I will see what can be done. It should be added that no manufacturer has hitherto complained of patterns not being exhibited at Glasgow.

LAW AND JUSTICE (METROPOLIS)—MIDDLESEX SESSIONS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, at the Middlesex Sessions on Saturday last, Mr. Commissioner Kerr and a jury dismissed in unbroken succession half-a-dozen cases, and that Mr. Commissioner Kerr remarked that for some reason which he knew, but would not disclose, several cases had been improperly sent for trial; who was the magistrate who committed each of the defendants, whose names are F. Warren, J. Connor, P. Merritt, E. Blanchflower (49), E. Blanchflower (23), L. Groves, J. O'Connor, R. M'Arthur, and L. Luff; and, what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Judge that in five, not six, small cases tried before him on Saturday last the defendants were acquitted by the jury. The Judge seems to have been misreported; for he informs me that, although the jury acquitted, in his opinion the cases generally were of such a nature that the magistrates were justified in sending them for trial. Under these circumstances, I see nothing in the matter to call for my interference.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Did all the cases come from the same magistrate, or from the same Police Court?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not aware. I will inquire.

MR. PICKERSGILL: But that was part of my Question. I will repeat that part of it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—SENTENCE ON DR. MAGNER.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that in Dr. Magner's case the County Court Judge offered to remit the sentence if Dr. Magner would cease to be a member of the National League; and, what authority the County Court Judge had to make such a demand in a district where the National League is a perfectly legal body?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have received no information from the learned Judge; but I believe it is not unusual to remit sentences on terms.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: When a sentence is remitted on terms it means that the party accused is to abstain from any illegal practice; but in Dr. Magner's district the National League is a perfectly legal organization, and has as good a right to exist as Her Majesty's Cabinet; and, therefore, I say the Judge had no right to require from Dr. Magner that he should abstain from attending perfectly legal meetings.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite understand the drift of the hon. Member's Question; but it would be improper in me to ask the learned Judge the reason why he remitted the sentence on the accused. The learned Judge is independent of me and of this House.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. F. HARDCASTLE (Lancashire, S.E., Westhoughton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether a cart, otherwise exempt from taxation, becomes subject to Cart and Wheel Tax if used by a farmer in "working out his rates" by carting material for repair of highroads by arrangement with the Surveyor of Highways?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The conveyance of materials for the repair of roads by ratepayers will not render their carts liable to duty if they would be otherwise exempt.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION FOR FISHERMEN.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Government will consent to insert in the Local Government Bill power to County Councils or other Authorities to provide proper harbour accommodation for fishermen, and to charge the cost thereof on the district benefited by the expenditure?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Whether or not it may be desirable that County Councils, when constituted, should have vested in them powers of providing harbour accommodation for fishermen, I cannot assent to the insertion in the Local Government Bill of provisions on this subject. I cannot propose that the Bill should be burdened with alterations of the general law which are not in any way essential to the constitution of the County Authority.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE NEW LONDON COUNTY AUTHORITY.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Statement showing separately for the Metropolis the effect of the financial proposals of the Government, giving, on the one hand, the ascertained or estimated proportions of the various taxes to be handed over to the new London County Authority, and, on the other hand, the cost of the services which will have to be borne by it in future, and showing the probable balance in relief of the Metropolitan Rates?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): This is one of several Questions put to me publicly and privately with reference to the financial results of the Bill individually and collectively, and I hope I may be allowed to give a somewhat general answer on the whole question thus raised. I have to say that it is quite impossible to give any information of such a kind as that sought for which could be regarded as in any degree reliable as a guide to the ultimate financial results to individual counties or areas within counties, for the following reasons:—First, the Licence Duties to be transferred are collected in what are called "collections;" and there is no statement obtainable showing the amounts collected separately in the boroughs and other areas within counties. This is with reference to the existing Licence Duties; but as to the proposed new duties, there is no possibility of forming any reliable estimate of the amount to be obtained from particular districts. Further, if it were possible to obtain any approximate estimate of the amounts at present collected, that would be a very insufficient guide as to what amounts will be collected when the Bill comes into operation, and it becomes the interest of those who require the licences to take them out in particular localities. The financial proposals in the Bill have not been based on estimated results in particular areas, but on general principles, which we believe to be sound. What will be the effect in particular areas can only be ascertained by experience.

REGISTER HOUSE, EDINBURGH—RIGHT OF INSPECTION.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Lord Advocate, If it is a fact that William Meikle (miner), Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, has been denied access to the Register House to see some titles referring to a property he claims in Lanarkshire, called Auchenbay; and, if so, whether such refusal was legal?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am not aware of the fact stated in this Question. Inquiry has been made, and the officials of the Department report that they know of no such case.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND) — CASE OF PETER GOWIE, OF PERTH.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been directed to the case of Peter Gowie, of Perth; and, if he can obtain any redress for his imprisonment, and the wrong he has had?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I presume the hon. Member means the case of Peter Gorrie, of Crieff. If so, my attention has been called to it on several occasions. Assuming that any wrong was done to him, I have no power of giving him any redress. He allowed his term of imprisonment to expire before making any complaint; and he did not avail himself of the remedy provided by law by bringing the sentence under review of the Superior Court.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (METROPOLIS) — SIR CHARLES WARREN'S PROCLAMATION.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If Sir Charles Warren's prohibition of public meetings extends to Clerkenwell Green?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I presume the hon. Member refers to the notice issued by Sir Charles Warren with reference to Trafalgar Square; this notice does not, of course, apply to other parts of London.

PUBLIC STREETS (METROPOLIS)—REMOVAL OF STALLS.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that in Poplar, and other parts of East London, the police have recently removed all stalls from market streets unfrequented by vehicular traffic, where such stalls had been used without complaint for many years; why, and at whose instance, such action has been taken; and, whether he will ascertain the opinion of the Local Authorities in regard to such interference?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the police had removed no stalls from the market streets alluded to; but in certain cases, where the stalls rendered the footpaths and streets practically impassable, they first cautioned the owners of the stalls, and, where that was ineffectual, they applied for summonses against the worst offenders, and in all the cases the magistrates convicted. The police had no other object in view than to keep the streets and roadways free for ordinary traffic. Any representations that the Local Authorities may address to me will be fully considered.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON inquired, whether one woman who had had a stall at one spot for 23 years had been summoned?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am not aware of the fact. If she has caused an obstruction for 23 years that gives her no right to continue to do so.

WAR OFFICE—COURT MARTIAL ON MAJOR TEMPLER.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any special reasons existed for placing Major Templer under arrest for two months before bringing him to trial on a charge in which an *alibi* was at once established; whether it is usual to hold a Court of Inquiry previous to a formal Court Martial, and why the custom was departed from in this instance; what was the amount paid to the Aclands in connection with this case; whether it is true that State secrets which Major Templer was charged with disclosing were actually disclosed to the Representative of a Foreign Power by the special orders of the War Office Authorities themselves; and, what steps the Government proposes to take, with a view to amend the Regulations, and strengthen the discipline of Government Offices and Works as to the secrets of warlike and other inventions in its possession?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In accordance with the practice usual in such cases, Major Templer was placed in arrest as soon as a *primâ facie* case against him was disclosed; which was the result of inquiries made at Birmingham by the Criminal Investigation Department, and of his identification by witnesses. That step having been taken, it became the duty of the Treasury Solicitor to pursue the further inquiries necessary, and to put the evidence into shape before instructing counsel for the prosecution. During this period Major Templer was in open arrest. It was not obligatory, and it seems to have been impracticable, to hold a Court of Inquiry, as the principal witnesses were civilians; and such a Court has no power to compel the attendance of witnesses, or to examine them on oath. A Court Martial, with full judicial powers, was necessary, in the interest both of Major Templer and the State, to dispose of the grave suspicions which had been cast on that officer. In answer to the third Question, the Aclands were paid £1 a-week for nine weeks, and 25*s.* a-week for three weeks. This was to keep them at hand, as they were necessary witnesses for the prosecution, and had been turned out of their coffee house at Birmingham. They were not paid anything until after they had identified Major Templer. I am informed that no disclosure of State secrets concerning balloons was made by order of the War Office. But the whole of the circumstances attending this Court Martial, and the construction of balloons at Chatham, are now undergoing careful investigation; and I should prefer to make no statement on the subject at the present moment.

Mr. HANBURY: I beg to give Notice that on the Vote for the War Office I will call attention to this case, and also to the apparent absence of proper precautions against the betrayal of secrets in the Government Offices and Works.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—NATIONAL TEACHERS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government propose to take any steps this year to improve the position of the National Teachers in Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Government had at present no definite intention on the subject. The Question appeared to him to be rather a Treasury Question; and he would suggest that the hon. Member should address himself to the Representative of the Treasury.

WAR OFFICE—DEFENCES OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.), asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can inform the House of the probable date when the defences of the Cape of Good Hope will be complete in all details—namely, forts finished, guns, ammunition, and stores delivered?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): As my noble and gallant Friend is aware, the defence of Table Bay has been undertaken in consequence of an agreement entered into between Sir Thomas Upington, on the part of the Cape Government and myself last year. Under that agreement the unskilled labour is being provided by the Cape Government; and I am unable to say exactly when the works there will be completed, though they will be pushed on, so far as we are concerned, as quickly as possible. The works at Simon's Bay, which have been undertaken by the Imperial Government, are almost complete. The armament is in a forward state. With the exception of two 9·2-inch guns, all the remaining guns proposed are either ready or are provided for in this year's Estimates, and should be completed within the year. All guns will be sent out with ammunition.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—COOKERY CLASS—CODE, 1887.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, If classes for Cookery, which have been, and are being, held in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of last year's Code in schools the school year of which has not yet terminated, will receive the grant in accordance with the terms of that Code, and not in accordance with the less favourable terms of the proposed new Code, which was laid upon the Table of the House on the 6th of March last, and has not yet been sanctioned?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The conditions required by the New Code will come into force at the end of the present month; and the arrangement of cookery classes ought to be brought into conformity with these conditions as speedily as possible. But the grant will not be forfeited, although these conditions have not been fulfilled throughout the whole of the current school year.

INDIA—CASE OF MR. W. TAYLER, FORMERLY COMMISSIONER OF PATNA.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the case of Mr. William Tayler, formerly Commissioner of Patna, has ever been investigated and decided by any Secretary of State for India; if so, whether he has any objection to stating the terms of, and reasons for, any such decision; whether it is the fact that the late Earl of Iddesleigh, then Sir Stafford Northcote, left the case partially investigated and undecided at the term of his Office as Secretary of State, and that his Successor at the India Office never proceeded with the investigation, but recorded his opinion against re-opening the case; and, whether any investigation of the case has ever been completed, or any decision made upon it?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The case of Mr. W. Tayler was first investigated and decided by the then Secretary of State for India, the Earl of Derby (then Lord Stanley), in 1859. His decision was to confirm the action of the Government of India and the Court of Directors, for reasons fully set forth in a despatch, dated June 1, 1859, which has been presented to Parliament. The communications between Mr. Tayler and Sir Stafford Northcote in 1867 are not recorded in the India Office. It appears, from Mr. Tayler's Memorial to the Secretary of State of October 13, 1868, that what Mr. Tayler originally asked Sir Stafford Northcote for was "a public and suitable recognition of his services." It is the practice of the India Office that all applications for honours are dealt with by the Secretary of State personally. There is no ground for the supposition that the Duke of Argyll neglected to investigate the case, or recorded an adverse opinion without due inquiry into the merits. The case has been investigated and decided by every subsequent Secretary of State. The grounds of their decisions have been generally that no facts or arguments were adduced to render it right, in their judgment, to reverse the decision of Lord Stanley in 1859, or those of their subsequent Predecessors in Office.

SPAIN—FIRING ON A PORTUGUESE LIFEBOAT.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any information regarding the alleged firing by Spanish Custom House officers on a Portuguese lifeboat which was going to the assistance of the crew of the *British Princess*, shipwrecked near the Hispano-Portuguese Frontier?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Full inquiry has been made by the Consul at Oporto, who states that the report was incorrect. The only survivors of the crew were rescued by Spanish boatmen. No Portuguese lifeboat was on the spot. After the survivors had been rescued, some shots were fired to prevent Portuguese boatmen from seizing floating wreckage. This appears to have given rise to the report.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON TRADE MARKS—THE REPORT.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the Report of the Departmental Committee on Trade Marks, presided over by Lord Herschell, will be laid upon the Table?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, the Report would be laid on the Table in the course of a few days.

ARMY (INDIA)—HONORARY SURGEONS TO THE VICEROY.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether honorary surgeons to the Viceroy of India have been prohibited wearing the aiguilette heretofore used by them; if so, by what authority and on what grounds?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Under the Dress Regulations of the Army, honorary surgeons to the Viceroy have no authority to wear such a decoration. If they have been in the habit of so doing, it has been an irregularity.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCES ON CARTS—THE WHEEL TAX.

COLONEL **GUNTER** (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, if a farmer carts coal for labourers on his farm, carts the labourer's furniture when entering his service from another farm, carts coal for his landlord, whereas by his farm agreement he is bound to do, he will be required to take out a licence as for a trade cart?

MR. **HALLEY STEWART** (Lincolnshire, Spalding) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If the Wheel Tax would be levied on a waggon used by a farmer for bringing back coals from a Railway Station for the use of labourers living and working on his farm, even if the waggon were habitually used for that purpose?

THE **CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am afraid that it is impossible to provide for all special cases in an Act of Parliament, which must be general in its term. Such details must be left to administration; but there is no intention of working the Act in an unduly severe manner. I do not think the case contemplated by the hon. Member for Spalding is at all likely to arise.

ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1887—COMPULSORY ACQUIREMENTS OF LAND ON LEASES.

MR. **COZENS-HARDY** (Norfolk, N.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, by means of a Provisional Order under "The Allotments Act, 1887," a Sanitary Authority can compulsorily acquire land upon lease instead of purchasing the fee simple; and, if not, whether the Government will introduce a Bill to confer this power upon Sanitary Authorities?

THE **PRESIDENT** (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, a Sanitary Authority could not compulsorily acquire land upon lease instead of purchasing the fee simple; and, for the reasons which were stated in the debate which arose on this question when the Allotments Bill was in Committee, it was not the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill conferring this power on Sanitary Authorities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ELECTIVE COUNCILLORS.

MR. **CHANNING** (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it will be possible for the Board to lay before the House a Statement of the proposed number of Elective Councillors for each county before the Committee stage of the Local Government Bill?

THE **PRESIDENT** (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, he could not undertake to lay the Statement before the House until the Committee stage.

INDIA (BOMBAY)—THE NEW DOCK.

ADMIRAL **FIELD** (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, When the controversy with the Indian Government on the question of the payment of the cost of construction of the proposed new dock at Bombay will be brought to an end, and the dock itself taken in hand as promised last Session, and as has been strongly recommended by successive Naval Commanders-in-Chief on the Indian Station during the last ten years as a vital necessity for the Fleet; and, whether, if the two Departments cannot agree to divide the cost of construction between the Imperial and Indian Governments, he will be pleased to refer the question for arbitration to a Naval Member of Parliament for prompt and decisive settlement?

THE **FIRST LORD** (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I can assure the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the Admiralty are fully alive to the importance of bringing the negotiations on the subject of the proposed Navy Dock at Bombay to a termination; and with this object it has been agreed that a Conference shall be held as soon as can be arranged between Representatives of the Departments concerned, the difference being not as to the necessity for a dock, but as to its dimensions, the Navy requiring a depth and width in excess of commercial wants. The extra requirements of the Navy entail a large additional expenditure, and the apportionment of that outlay is not easy of adjustment. The hon. and gallant Gentleman suggests that the question be referred to a Naval Member of Parliament; and though I am much obliged for his kindly offer of personal assistance, as the decision involves expenditure and taxation it must be left to those who are personally responsible for such matters.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, under the Budget Resolution No. 7, which places a tax of £5 upon "every horse which shall start or run for any plate, prize, or sum of money or other thing," it is the intention of the Government to enforce this tax upon horses run in hunt or other local races, and which are, for the most part, hunters in the possession of tenant farmers; and, whether the Government have considered the serious blow that such a tax would be to all small country hunt races?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir. The clauses imposing the duty on racehorses will be so framed as to exclude horses competing in races expressly confined to horses regularly and *bonâ fide* used as hunters, or to horses which are the *bonâ fide* property of farmers of a particular district or locality, and which have not been trained for the race in any training stable.

PARKS (METROPOLIS) — BATTERSEA PARK—DISMISSAL OF WORKMEN.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether it is true that 19 workmen employed in Battersea Park have received notice of dismissal, some of whom have been employed upwards of 20 years; and, what the Board propose to do with the ornamental stonework from Burlington House, which has been so long, and still is, lying in Battersea Park?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that 19 out of a total of a staff of 53 received notice of dismissal, and each individual case had been fully considered by the Committee on the Report of a superior officer. Of that number three were over 70 years of age; five were over 60; and seven over 50. Of the remainder one was dishonest, and the others were unfit for work. As regarded the ornamental stonework it was still lying in the Park; and the Board had no purpose to which the stones could be advantageously applied. The First Commissioner had accordingly been asked that they should be removed.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — TRANSFER OF CONSTABLES OF THE A DIVISION.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) (for Mr. KELLY) (Camberwell, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the fact that a number of police constables, who for years have been attached to the A Division, have recently been transferred to Outer Metropolitan Districts without any proper notice, and in such a manner as to cause very great inconvenience and loss to themselves and to their wives and families; who is the officer responsible for the transfer of such police constables; and, will the Government consider the desirability of preventing the transfer of any more of the constables usually placed on duty in the House and its precincts to other Divisions?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The facts are not as suggested by the Question of my hon. Friend. Of the married men transferred I am informed that only five have been in the Division over three years and three over two years. The Commissioner of Police is responsible for these transfers. The Government do not think it desirable to interfere with the discretion of the Commissioner of Police in directing transfers of constables with a view to the better distribution of the force.

EXCISE—WINE AND SPIRIT LICENCES.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the minimum percentage of alcohol in a beverage which the Commissioners of Excise consider as bringing it within the category of drinks requiring a Wine and Spirit Licence for their sale?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): In the case of wines professedly fermented a licence is required, irrespective of the amount of alcohol present; and in the case of other beverages the limit adopted by the Commissioners is 3 per cent of proof spirit, beyond which a spirit or other licence is required, according to the nature of the article.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTES AND FREE LIBRARIES—SUPPLY OF BLUE BOOKS.

Mr. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has provided in the Estimates for supplying Parliamentary Returns of Expenditure for County Government, and Returns of National Expenditure, to Mechanics' Institutions and Free Libraries, in accordance with the promise made last Session?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: The hon. Member is, I think, in error in supposing that such promise was given as regards Mechanics' Institutes; but some provision has been made in the Estimates for Papers such as he describes for Free Libraries.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE "COMPENSATION CLAUSE."

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he has formed an Estimate of the total value which the vested interest of the liquor trade would amount to in case the "Compensation Clause" in the Local Government Bill became law; and, if not, if he will furnish the House with such information before the Licensing Clauses are reached in Committee?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have not attempted to form any Estimate of the total value which the vested interest of the liquor trade would amount to in case the Compensation Clauses of the Local Government Bill became law; neither does it appear to me that if it were possible to make anything like an approximate Estimate—and I think that it would be impossible—it would be of any practical value. The compensation will only be payable in the particular cases in which renewal of a licence is refused; and it is only in those cases that the question of the value for the purpose of compensation will arise.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSION AT ANTRIM.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a decision of Mr. Edward Greer, Chairman of the County Down Sub-Commission, delivered at Antrim on Monday last, whereby he dismissed the fair rent application of a leaseholder, named Edward Nelson, who is a tenant on the estate of Sir Richard Wallace; whether Mr. Greer held, on the authority of "Donoughmore *v.* Forrest," that the assignee of a lease which contains a clause against alienation, even though he had been accepted as tenant by the landlord many years ago, is not entitled to the privileges of the Land Act of 1887 unless the lessor or landlord had, by endorsement in writing, consented to the alienation; whether it is a fact that upwards of 75 per cent of the agricultural leases in Ulster contain covenants against alienation, and that the practice generally followed on the assignment of leaseholds there was merely to enter the name of the assignee in the rent-book as the new tenant, and give him the rent receipts in his own name; whether he is aware that, if this narrow interpretation be put on the word "lessee" in "The Irish Land Act, 1887," more than half of the leaseholders in Ulster will be debarred from having fair rents fixed; and, whether, considering the importance of the subject, and the danger with which these leaseholders are threatened, the Government will take steps to have the benefit of the fair rent clause secured to all the leaseholders to whom it was intended to apply?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) (who replied) said: I do not think the grievance is of so far-reaching a character as the hon. Member seems to suggest; but I think it is, or it may become, a real one. The Government have had their attention drawn to the matter, and have prepared a clause which would meet the difficulty. Since doing so I have been informed that the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) proposes to ask leave to bring in a Bill for a similar purpose. I shall be glad to confer with the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and to consider whether the object could best be attained by his Bill, by a Government Bill, or by a new clause in the Land Commission Bill. Of course, it must be distinctly understood that the Government cannot consent to any amendment in the Leasehold Clauses of the Act of last year; except one which will carry more perfectly into effect what was universally understood to be the intention of the Government which brought in the measure and of the Legislature that passed it.

Mr. DILLON: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will bring in a separate Bill, and not tie up its fate with his Land Commission Bill.

IRELAND—THE RIFLES AT DERRYBEG CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state if the Rifles stationed at Gweedore Hotel, and a number of police, with their respective officers, and under the command of Mr. Bourke, R.M., proceeded to Derrybeg Catholic Church on Sunday last, and stood under arms awaiting the dispersion of the congregation and exasperating the people, though there was no meeting held and no speeches were delivered; what instructions were given to the officer in command, or by him to the forces; and, whether he will state for what reason the soldiers and police have been sent to Gweedore?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Rifles stationed at Gweedore Hotel and a number of police, with their respective officers, and under the command of Mr. Bourke, R.M., proceeded to Derrybeg on Sunday last and stood under arms awaiting the dispersion of the congregation. They went there for the purpose of protecting shorthand writers and longhand writers who were ordered there on duty. The Rev. Mr. M'Fadden had previously announced that he would on that day address the people for the last time, and that it would be remembered hereafter, or words to that effect, and he actually stated in his sermon that day that he would afterwards address the people outside. The soldiers and police are at Gweedore for the purpose of preserving the peace.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAXES.

Mr. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the event of the tax upon vehicles and wheels passing into law, he will consider the case of traders and salesmen employing vehicles as moveable market stands—for instance, carts and vans used to expose hay and straw upon for sale in markets as proper for exemption, having regard to the slight use of the roads by this class of vehicle, and to the fact that the proposed new tax charges would operate with great hardship upon trades affording only a very narrow margin of profit?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): This is not a Question which I can very well answer without knowing the weight of the carts, and the manner in which they are employed while not standing in the market. The general principle I have in view is that carts using the roads should contribute directly towards their maintenance; but if the hon. Member wishes to raise the point in Committee on the Bill of course it could be discussed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — CLAUSE 69, SUB-SECTION 3.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, by sub-section 3, Clause 69, of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, it is intended that the accounts of those towns which are proposed to be dealt with as separate counties shall be audited by the District Auditors appointed by the Local Government Board?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Sub-section 3, of Clause 69, is included in Part V. of the Local Government Bill, which relates to finance; and it will be seen from Clause 30 (5) that that part of the Bill will not apply to boroughs which are to be treated as separate counties, except so far as is expressly provided by that part. The accounts of boroughs which will be separate counties will not, therefore, be audited by auditors appointed by the Local Government Board.

COLLIERY ACCIDENTS—DOUGLAS BANK COLLIERY, WIGAN.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can now give any information relative to the shaft accident which occurred at Douglas Bank Colliery, Wigan, on Friday last; and, whether he can say what steps will be taken to ensure a searching investigation into the cause of the accident?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Inspector as to the Douglas Bank Colliery accident, who informs me that he has made a careful examination of the shaft and fittings, and he found that the bucket in its descent had become entangled with a wire signal rope, and was thus upset. The bucket ought to have passed about four feet clear of the signal rope. The Inspector was himself lowered rapidly in the shaft to see what clearance there was; and he considers it to be ample, and that the machinery and fittings are excellent. The inquest is being held to-day, when I hope that the causes of this sad accident will be fully elucidated.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION—FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS FROM ANTRIM.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) (for Mr. M'CARTAN) (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can now state how many of the fair rent applications of leaseholders, and also of present tenants, served on the Land Commission from the County of Antrim still remain undisposed of; whether he has received a copy of Resolutions adopted by the tenant farmers of Larne Union District, at a meeting held in the Town Hall of Larne on the 28th March last, complaining of the delay in fixing the fair rents there, and requesting the appointment of a Sub-Commission for the County Antrim; on what date the next sitting of a Sub-Commission will be held for the County of Antrim; whether he can now give the names of the gentlemen who will constitute that Sub-Commission; and, whether Mr. Davidson, J.P., Rademon, County Down, who was among the first appointments of Sub-Commissioners made under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," is one of those recently re-appointed, or whether it is his intention to re-appoint him; and, if not, whether he can state what objection is there to the re-appointment of Mr. Davidson, considering that he was selected as one of the scrutineers to report the prices of produce under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that there are now 1,260 unheard applications of leaseholders and 625 of yearly tenants. I have received a copy of the Resolutions referred to. The Land Commissioners state that, as at present arranged, the Sub-Commission which has been recently sitting in the County Antrim will probably return there after May. The names of the gentlemen forming that Sub-Commission are Messrs. J. J. Guiry, H. Johnston, S. Mowbray, and F. O'Callaghan, with Mr. E. Greer as legal Commissioner. The gentleman mentioned in the last paragraph ceased to be an Assistant Commissioner in July, 1883, when the number of Sub-Commissions was reduced. Without in any way referring to the case in question, I would point out that the duty of appointing Assistant Land Commissioners is vested by statute in the Irish Government. In making the appointments they act with a full sense of their responsibility; and they cannot undertake to enter into any discussion in regard to individual cases, from which no public advantage could be derived.

POLICE (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT)—ATTENDANCE AT THE HOUSE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) who had given Notice that he would ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will suspend the operation of the recent Regulation changing the police in attendance on this House until the House itself has had an opportunity to express an opinion on the subject, said, that he was informed that the new Regulation would not come into operation until the close of the Session; and he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as he believed that hon. Members in every quarter of the House felt a strong objection to changing the Parliamentary police and placing in a position of anxiety and uncertainty a body of men with whom they all were in friendly relations, he did not see his way to cancel or withdraw that Regulation?

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.), before the right hon. Gentleman answered the Question, also wished to ask, whether it was true that many of those men had foregone their claims to promotion in order to remain on the staff of the police at the House of Commons; and whether, if that was true, it would not be unfair to allow that order to be carried into effect?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am unable to answer the Question put by the hon. Baronet; but, if desired, I can procure information on the point. In answer to the Question on the Paper, I have to say that the recent Regulation concerning the police in attendance on this House has been made by the Commissioner of Police in the exercise of his discretion as responsible for the good conduct and discipline of the Force. I cannot suppose that the House would wish me to interfere with this discretion ["Yes"] without reasons which, so far as I am aware, do not exist; and I therefore do not propose to suspend the operation of the Regulation.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, that he would make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House. He had already given Notice of a Motion on that Question; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the answer which had been given by the Home Secretary, he would not afford the House an early opportunity of discussing and pronouncing an opinion on that Regulation?

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton), before the First Lord of the Treasury replied, wished also to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he did not think that the convenience of hon. Members ought to be considered to some extent before changing officials who were in attendance on the House and who knew hon. Members for persons who did not know them, and who would, therefore, be at a disadvantage in delivering their letters, &c.

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I would say, in answer to the hon. Member for Northampton, that, undoubtedly, regard must be had—and I hope always will be had—to the convenience of Members of this House; but I am not aware that any arrangement has been made that will in the slightest degree affect their convenience. As to the appeal made to me by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, as he himself has mentioned, this Regulation does not come into operation till the end of the present Session. There will, therefore, be full opportunity on the Police Vote for him to make any observations that he may wish to offer; but, having regard to the responsibilities of the Chief Commissioner of Police, we should be slow indeed to interfere with the duty cast upon him of securing the efficiency of the Force and the good conduct of all its members.

Sir JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) asked, What reason, if any, had been assigned by the Chief Commissioner for the issue of the Regulation?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have no official information of the reason. I only gathered from private communication that, in the judgment of the Chief Commissioner, the prolonged service of constables in attendance in the precincts of the House was not conducive to the good discipline of the Force. It is a privilege which is very much desired by members of the Force; and if for a long period of time it is confined to particular members of the Force it may excite jealousies. There are also other reasons that might be suggested which make it undesirable that the same persons, as a matter of permanent employment, should be always engaged on the same duty.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman extend the same principle to the Army, and make all the Line soldiers occasionally Guards to Her Majesty?

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked, Whether, as this was a matter of Privilege, the Home Secretary would cause any of the heroes of Trafalgar Square to be appointed to serve in the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES AT ENNIS.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any further information to give the House with reference to the conflict between the people and the police and military at Ennis on Sunday last; whether he still adheres to his statement that stones were thrown from the building where the meeting was held; and, if so, whether this was done before, during, or after the police had been ordered to charge, whether any of the police or military were seriously injured, and, if so, how many; and, how many of the people received serious injury?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Sir, stones were thrown before and after. No one was seriously injured. The reporter of *The Irish Times* appears to have been most hurt, but his injury is not serious.

Mr. PARNELL: I must request the right hon. Gentleman to give an answer to my Question. I have asked, in addition to whether stones were thrown both before and after, whether any stones were thrown from the building where the meeting was held; and, whether these stones were thrown during, before, or after the meeting?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a Question which I have answered. Stones were thrown from the building both before and after the meeting.

Mr. PARNELL: Were any of the military or police injured?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already answered that Question. I told the hon. Gentleman that the reporter of *The Irish Times* was most injured, but his injury is not serious. So far as I am aware, no one was seriously injured.

Mr. PARNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman know whether any stones were thrown from the yard where this attack was made?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: From the yard?

Mr. PARNELL: Yes.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware. I cannot answer that. I rather think not; but I will not be sure.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, in addition to the reporter of *The Irish Times*, the reporter of the *The Freeman's Journal* was also seriously injured by a baton stroke?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I am not.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) (for Mr. W. Redmond) (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the fact that two gentlemen representing *The Freeman's Journal* and *Irish Times* were seriously wounded by the Hussars and police on last Sunday in the town of Ennis; and, whether an investigation will be held to ascertain how it was that two representatives of the Press, in the exercise of their duty, were so assaulted by the forces of the Crown?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Divisional Magistrate reports that sundry representatives of the Press appear to have been present on the occasion in question. The reporter of the *Irish Times* seems to have been most hurt; but the doctor who attended him has stated that the injury is not serious. It is to be regretted that any representative of the Press should have suffered. All the circumstances of the case will, doubtless, come fully before the public in connection with the trial of the persons to-morrow who are charged with stone-throwing.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COST OF CONTESTED ELECTIONS.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the Government have considered or made any calculations, first, as to the total additional charges which may be thrown upon the rates by the cost of contested elections in Electoral Divisions under the Local Government Bill; and, secondly, as to the cost per head of the voters on the Register in each Division in respect of such elections; and, if so, whether he can state what is the estimate they have arrived at?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The only reliable information in possession of the Government on this subject is a Return of the cost of the Parliamentary Elections of 1886 in England and Wales, which has been presented to the House. By that it appears that the total amount of the Returning Officers' charges, in both contested and uncontested elections in that year was £109,000. The rateable value of England and Wales is £148,900,000; so that if these charges had fallen on the rates they would have amounted to about one-sixth of 1*d.* in the £. It is, however, to be borne in mind that of the £109,000 nearly £42,000 represents the cost in respect of Parliamentary boroughs. As it is proposed that the election of County Councillors should take place at the same time as the Municipal Elections, it may be expected that in Municipal boroughs there will be no very considerable increase of the present cost. I have no doubt, therefore, that the actual cost of the elections of County Councillors will be very considerably less than an average sum of one-sixth of 1*d.* in the £.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX—HORSES AND MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the fact that medical practitioners are now allowed to deduct the expenses of their horses in the calculation of Income Tax, as being necessary for the carrying on of their business?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, Sir; if the horse be used wholly in the exercise of the profession. I think I see the drift of the hon. Gentleman's Question.

SHIPPING DUES OF FOREIGN STATES.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it would be possible to lay upon the Table of the House a Return giving the Taxes and Dues levied on shipping, and the purposes to which the proceeds may be appropriated, by the Governments of Foreign States?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The information in question would be extremely useful; and I will confer with the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade upon the subject.

THE EXECUTIVE (IRELAND)—THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following statement in Monday's *Times* is true—

> "Lord Ashbourne, the Irish Lord Chancellor, was engaged throughout Saturday at the Irish Office (in London) in connection with the proclamation of the Nationalist meetings in Ireland yesterday;"

and, if not, can it be ascertained how this information was communicated to that journal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will probably himself feel it is no part of my business to inquire as to how Members of the Government occupy their time. I have no special information as to how the report got into the newspapers, and I would recommend the hon. and learned Gentleman to consult some journalist.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that he did not ask any such frivolous Question as that suggested by the Chief Secretary. His Question really was, whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland discharged any executive functions?

[No reply.]

MR. T. M. HEALY: Answer, answer!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY respectfully submitted that his Question was regular and proper. He wanted to know whether, contrary to the practice of previous Lord Chancellors in Ireland, and contrary to the practice in England, the Irish Lord Chancellor had any duties except those of a purely judicial character—whether, in fact, he discharged executive functions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman must be perfectly aware that the present Irish Lord Chancellor is a Member of the Cabinet, and that the Lord Chancellor of England is always a Member of the Cabinet. I can assure him that the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland no more exercises executive functions than his Predecessors have done.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it a fact that the Irish Lord Chancellor was—

> "Engaged throughout Saturday at the Irish Office in connection with proclamation of the Nationalist meetings in Ireland"

on Sunday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already told the hon. and learned Gentleman that it is no part of my duty to state how Members of the Government occupy their time. I do not, however, wish to give offence to the hon. and learned Gen-man, and I will depart from the general rule I have laid down so far as to tell him what I think he might conjecture for himself—namely, that the arrangements with regard to the meetings on Sunday were made long before Saturday last.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE FRANCHISE—COUNTY COUNCILS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the views of the Government as to the franchise to be created by the Local Government Bill are correctly expressed in the Marquess of Salisbury's speech in Carnarvon, as reported in *The Times* of the 10th instant—namely,

> "They (the Counties) return members by precisely the same franchise as that which will return these bodies (the County Councils);"

and, is it intended by the Government that the Parliamentary franchise shall be the franchise under the Local Government Bill instead of a rating franchise?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have had no opportunity of ascertaining whether the report in question correctly describes the Marquess of Salisbury's remarks; but there is so little difference between the two franchises that I think anyone would be justified in alluding to the franchise under the Bill, which is the municipal franchise, as a similar franchise to the Parliamentary, especially when, as would seem to have been the case in this instance, a parallel was being drawn between the position of Parliamentary and County voters under the new proposal of the Government.

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it would be possible for the debate on the Local Government Bill that night to include the discussion of the principle involved in the next Order on the Paper—Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the two Bills referred to were essential parts of the same measure, and it would be convenient that both Bills should be discussed on the Motion for the second reading of the Local Government Bill. He believed that that course would be in accordance with the Regulations of the House, and he would ask the Speaker to say whether it could be adopted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Under the circumstances of the case, and considering the close connection between the Bills, I do not think I ought to raise any objection to a general discussion taking place upon the two measures.

ADMIRALTY — DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL, ROYAL MARINES.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If it is intended the present Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Marines, shall, after his promotion in the Corps in May next from Lieutenant General to General, continue to hold his present appointment; and, if not, whether a Colonel Commandant will be selected to fill the post, it being a Colonel's appointment?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Order in Council governing this appointment specifies that the officer selected for or holding this appointment shall not be below the rank of Colonel. I am not prepared to bind myself beforehand to the particular use to which I may put the discretionary power thus given.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION)—PROGRESS.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What is the total amount of Consols converted up to date?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As the House is aware, to-day is the last day up to which assents can be given for the conversion of Consols and Reduced into New Stock. I have not yet got the statistics of to-day; but I think I may tell the hon. Member and the House that the assents to the conversion of Consols and Reduced will not fall short of £280,000,000 by this afternoon, which will be exclusive of the assents given in later on by Trustees. Taking this, together with the conversion of the "New Threes," the total Stock converted amounts to about £450,000,000.

In reply to Sir George Campbell (Kirkcaldy, &c.),

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that he would to-morrow state the amount of the Debt remaining still unconverted and liable to be paid off.

RAILWAYS AND DEEP SEA FISHERY HARBOURS (IRELAND).

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government intend to take early steps to give effect to the recommendations of their Royal Commission regarding railways or deep sea fishery harbours in Ireland?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I answered a similar Question on the 23rd of last month. I am sorry to say the Government have not yet been able to arrive at any decision in the matter other than that which I expressed on that occasion—namely, that sufficient time has not yet been allowed for the purpose.

PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): Will the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury inform the House when the Government intend to introduce their long-promised legislation on the subject of Irish Public Works?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I have answered that Question before. I have got no Notice of this particular Question; and if the hon. Gentleman puts it on the Paper I will answer it.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he intended to ask the House to give precedence to-morrow to the Local Government Bill over the other Orders of the Day?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Certainly, Sir; I intend to adhere to the understanding at which the House and the Government arrived before the holidays—that is, that we should give precedence to the Local Government Bill to-morrow, in order that progress may be made with it.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give Notice that when the First Lord of the Treasury moves for precedence, I shall oppose the Motion.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): When the conversation on the subject took place, although I was desirous to expedite the Bill, I think the understanding of which the right hon. Gentleman speaks was simply an understanding of his own intention.

Mr. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) asked, whether, supposing the debate on the Local Government Bill was not concluded on Monday night, the First Lord of the Treasury proposed to ask private Members to give way on Tuesday? He had an important Notice in reference to State-aided colonization on the Paper for that day, and he was anxious not to lose the opportunity of bringing it before the House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I do not doubt the hon. Member will have ample opportunity of bringing on the interesting subject named, and I should be glad to have a subject of that importance discussed; but I must ask permission to decline answering a Question as to what may be done on Tuesday, although I cannot doubt myself that the House will conclude before that day the debate on the Local Government Bill.

NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE, 1882—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

THE DISTURBANCE AT ENNIS.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Sir, I ask leave to move the adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the attack on the people of Ennis on Sunday last by the Police and Military; and the conduct of Colonel Turner and other officers in charge, together with the policy of the Irish Executive, as evinced by these and other proceedings in directing the Police and Military to assault persons taking part in alleged illegal meetings, instead of proceeding against such alleged offenders according to law.

Mr. SPEAKER said, he did not think the Motion would come within the Rule as to a definite matter of urgent public importance unless the hon. Member struck out the reference to "other proceedings."

Mr. PARNELL said, he would assent to the words referred to being omitted.

The words "other proceedings" *struck out.*

The pleasure of the House not having been signified,

Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

Mr. PARNELL: Sir, I regret very much to have to intervene for a short time between the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) and the very important and interesting subject which he is to introduce to the notice of the House to-night. But it is one of the misfortunes of the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is carrying out his functions, that we are compelled to notice often and frequently his arbitrary proceedings; and although I have always endeavoured that debates on this Irish Question and the action of the Executive should take place at times of as little inconvenience as possible to the Government, and to the House generally, yet we are undoubtedly driven, in view of these occurrences in Ennis, upon the present occasion to take the earliest opportunity of bringing the matter before the attention of the House. Sir, when I read on Monday last of what had happened at Ennis my blood boiled at the horrible result of the barbarity there perpetrated, and it was with difficulty I could restrain myself from taking immediate notice of the attacks on the people; but I abstained from doing so, because I saw it was the right of the Chief Secretary to have ample opportunity of giving any excuses he might have, of his getting the facts of the case together, and of presenting this horrible occurrence, if he could, in a somewhat different light than that in which it has been presented to the public by no less than three different newspaper correspondents. However, as the right hon. Gentleman has not thought proper to take advantage of the various opportunities given him to give a full and satisfactory explanation, I am bound to assume that the right hon. Gentleman has sought refuge almost in silence, because be has no explanation to give. These occurrences are now familiar to the House and to the public; but I wish to say, in the first instance, in reference to the statement of the Chief Secretary made a little while ago, in reply to a Question, that proceedings were to be taken to-morrow against the persons charged with stone-throwing at Ennis, that in what I have to say I shall not say anything in reference to the persons charged with throwing stones, or who possibly may have thrown them, and I shall confine myself to the action of the police against these persons who were in the yard, and who could not consequently throw stones from the upper windows of the house, the very and only place about the premises from which it is alleged stones were thrown. Therefore, it will not be in the power of the right hon. Gentleman, in any remarks he makes, to say that the matter is *sub judice;* because the question which is to be *sub judice* to-morrow is the question of the stone-throwing, according to the right hon. Gentleman; and I have no remark to make, no criticism to make, against the action of the police in reference to persons who threw stones. If the people throw stones, the police or the military are entitled to grapple with and arrest them; but the question is quite different with regard to persons charged with a breach of the law and nothing else, such as taking part in an alleged illegal meeting, where the question of the illegality of the meeting has still to be decided, as well as the question as to whether the meeting was legal at all. Independently of any such investigation the police and military have taken the action of which I complain against those alleged offenders, and it is because of that action I complain, and not of the action of the police against the alleged stone-throwers, that I bring this Motion for the adjournment of the House. It may be said that if any person is aggrieved by the action of the police in Ireland, he has the same remedy as in England—he may take out a summons against the policeman who assaulted him, and that summons would be investigated in a Court in the ordinary manner. But one of the crying injustices in reference to the control of the police in Ireland is that there is no possible way of identifying a police constable who exceeds his duty. The police in Ireland do not, like the English police, wear numbers—they are a military force, as we well know, and they do not partake of any of those elements of a civil force which belong to the Metropolitan Police. Consequently, persons assaulted by policemen in Ireland have no remedy. In all probability these policemen had been brought from a district 100 miles away into the town for that day, and returned the same night to the place where they came from, and, therefore, there is no chance of injured persons identifying their assailants. So it happens that police brought into contact with people in Ireland have, practically speaking, full immunity against identification if they exceed their duties. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that there was stone-throwing—I think he said showers of stones. He said to-day some stones were thrown from the building in question before the attack was made by the police on the people—before the baton charge was ordered to be made upon the people by the police. He also stated that to the best of his information he does not believe stones were thrown from the yard in question; and, therefore, in what I have to say, I will confine myself to the incidents that took place in the yard—to what was done by the people in the yard and what was done to the people in the yard by the police and soldiers. I shall ask the House to agree with me that because stones were thrown at the police from the top storey of the building was no reason why the people who were in the yard should be attacked and assaulted in the way they were. Even the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, short as it is, that some stones were thrown from the building is not corroborated by any independent account, or by the statements of the three newspaper correspondents who were present from *The London Times*, *The Freeman's Journal*, and *The Irish Times*—a Conservative organ in Dublin—all of whom assert that there was no stone-throwing, that there was no riot or assault committed by the people at all until after the arrests had been made and the building had been cleared, and then the correspondent of *The Times* admits that one or two stones were thrown. Let us take the description of the occurrence given by the correspondent of *The Irish Times* first of all. He says, after describing how the meeting had been held—

"As the people were going out through the gateway leading from the yard into the lane they found the gateway flung in and policemen taking the names of those who left. One or two reporters declined to give their own names, but gave those of their newspapers. I endeavoured to make my way to Colonel Turner, who was apparently in charge of the mounted soldiers. The 3rd Hussars were drawn up in front of the gateway. I was then close enough to speak to Colonel Turner. There was no hooting or cheering, no missile thrown, and the men were leaving quietly and giving their names to the police, when at the very moment I was about to escape from the gateway Colonel Turner turned in his saddle, and, addressing the officer in charge of the dragoons, said—'Draw your swords and clear them out of that.' Then the police, and afterwards the hussars, charged the people in the archway. The baton charge of the police swept over me, and then I was ridden at by a mounted soldier. I was the only person there wearing a silk hat. With his sword he pierced my hat and just missed my scalp. Wheeling his horse he rode again at me, and, raising my right hand to save myself from the blow, he cleaved one of my fingers to the bone, and striking a back-handed blow disabled my other arm. My brother journalist from Dublin had already gone under the baton charge. The people made no resistance, and four arrests were made."

The Freeman's Journal correspondent, Mr. Murray, says—

"The gate was opened and the police entered the narrow archway, which was the outlet from a rectangular shaped yard in front of the stores, the roadway boundary being on the other side of them. In the roadway was drawn up a troop of the 3rd Hussars, and about 50 men of the Derbyshire Regiment, with a large number of police. Colonel Turner was about three yards from the entrance, and he directed the police to take the names of the people who had been at the meeting. Some of the policemen were engaged doing this, when Colonel Turner ordered the police to draw their batons. The order was executed with savage alacrity, and the police rushed in among the people. I was standing along with some representatives of the Press at the gate, as already stated, within a few feet of Colonel Turner, who was in a state bordering on frenzy, his eyes protruding, and apparently quite beside himself with agitation. The policeman who was in front rushed at me, and dealt me a staggering blow of his baton on the top of my head, which made me reel backwards, the blood flowing profusely down my face. The people were beaten in the most wanton and unmerciful manner, a portion of the police running amuck among the meeting right and left with ferocious savagery. However, not content with this, Colonel Turner ordered the hussars to charge the people, and they instantly made their way into the small yard, with drawn sabres, cutting at the people. Mr. John G. Hill, the representative of *The Irish Times*, was slashed at by a hussar, who passed his sword through Mr. Hill's hat. He then slashed downwards at him. Mr. Hill raised his hand to shield his face, and received a very severe wound. The soldier took another try, and succeeded this time in maiming Mr. Hill's other hand. The police continued to strike the people, pursuing them into corners and lofts where they had made their way. In one of the lofts the people barricaded the entrance in order to protect themselves, and the infantry were ordered to dislodge them. While the people were making their way out, nearly everyone bearing traces of wounds, District Inspector Hill called out,—'Well done, boys! Is the fun all over?'"

Well, Sir, I now come to the report of *The London Times*' correspondent, Mr. Reeves, who was there also, and in his report wired over, which appeared on Monday, he says—

> "When the people had descended into the yard for the purpose of leaving, a number of constables barred their exit. Considerable confusion was the result of this step, and the noise in the yard reaching the ears of the police and constabulary now massing outside the gate in the lane, Colonel Turner ordered the yard to be cleared by constables carrying staves. The order was executed. The police who had forced the gateway, plied their staves indiscriminately, and sent the people inside running up to the lofts for shelter from their batons. To make matters worse, some of the cavalry rode into the yard, and wounded two Press men, one of whom (Mr Hill), a reporter to *The Irish Times*, had the hat cut off his head by a sabre stroke, and the small finger of one of his hands almost severed by a second blow from the trooper. Another man had his skull laid bare by a policeman's baton. The people inside the yard retook possession of the upper rooms in the store, and here, after a scene of imminent danger and great excitement, about 75 persons were subsequently arrested, and the store was cleared. . . . . . A stone was flung at one of the hussars on patrol duty."

Then, according to the London correspondent of *The Times*, corroborated by the other correspondents on the spot, the showers of stones mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman dwindled down to the fact that one stone was flung at the police when the whole thing was over; and I submit, Sir, that entirely independent of the proceedings against the stone-throwers, we ought to get some explanation from the Government regarding the attack by the police and military on a small enclosed yard of people, who, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own admission, had done nothing at all, had committed no offence except that of taking part in an alleged illegal meeting, who were doing what the police asked them to do—quietly giving their names, making no resistance whatever, and inflicting on these persons, for an alleged offence before its investigation by a proper tribunal, additional punishment in the shape of serious injuries and nearly loss of life. Under the Coercion Act of last Session, the Executive took powers to inflict hard labour as a consequence of sentences by tribunals on persons who took part in illegal meetings; but if you had the desire to get the right to massacre or maim the people who took part in such meetings, you should have taken such power under your Act. The Act of last year did not give you the power to use the forces of the Crown in killing and maiming innocent people, and the House should be careful to see that the Irish Executive does not exceed its powers as it did on the occasion to which I am referring. We have the very vague statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, that some stones were thrown from the top of this store. We have it advanced as the only excuse and defence for the attack by the police. I, however, submit it is not an excuse for the attack by the police. It is not an excuse for the action of the police against many different persons in entirely different places. It is not an excuse for permitting Colonel Turner to order the constables to rush pell mell into the yard—into an enclosed yard—and to baton unfortunate people indiscriminately who are doing nothing. It is not an excuse for Colonel Turner to order the hussars with drawn sabres into this enclosed yard, to slash right and left; and it was no excuse for orderiug the foot soldiers into the yard with fixed bayonets, when the people were quiet and using no force. I submit that, from your own point of view, Colonel Turner not only exceeded his duty, but behaved with almost incredible barbarity. This gentleman, I believe, is the same gentleman who during the Viceroyalty of Lord Aberdeen was a great Home Ruler. He has soon turned round, and is now equally great on the other side, and I can only suppose he thinks it necessary to purge himself from the taint of Home Rule by actions such as these. I cannot account in any other way for his conduct. It may be said that, being in charge of such a large force, he lost his head on the occasion; but he should not have repeated his conduct so frequently in the direction of which I complain. He might have been excused perhaps from ordering the police in—although it was an intemperate and rash act—to baton people, but, following that, to order the hussars in with their horses and sabres, and further, to order in the infantry soldiers with their bayonets fixed on their rifles, were most reprehensible acts. In view of the spirit which has been exhibited by a section of the military in Ireland, it is exceedingly dangerous to be employing them in such a manner—to send them indiscriminately among the people, especially into buildings where they cannot possibly be under the control of their officers, and it might have led to considerable loss of life at this meeting. The soldiers are armed men—young, lusty men who are trained to bloodshed and war, and they are not in the position of the Irish constables—they do not understand the feelings of the people—and it is exceedingly dangerous to allow these armed soldiers to get away from the control of their officers and into unarmed crowds. If you persist in this course, all I say is, that the responsibility upon the heads of the Irish Executive and upon the head of the Chief Secretary will be a very great one if there should be loss of life. By all means, put your Coercion Act in force as you have got it. You have seen that imprisonment has no terror for the Irish people. But that is no reason why you should invent new punishments—these infamous attacks and assaults by armed forces of the Crown—this punishment of men by having their lives set upon by soldiers, and having their hats transfixed by the sabres of dragoons. If the right hon. Gentleman wants these powers, let him ask Parliament for them; but, until he has got them, I submit that he is not entitled to use them. If he wishes to proclaim martial law, let him do so, and then the people would know what they have to expect. But let him not take the matter into his own hands; let him not use such officials as Colonel Turner to inflict on large bodies of men additional punishment to those the law provides. I beg, Sir, to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) has raised in the course of his speech two different points, which he intermixed in a way which renders it rather difficult to deal with them. I will, however, take them separately, as I shall thus be able to deal with them more easily. The first point relates to the handling of the police and troops by Colonel Turner on the ocasion of the storming of this warehouse, when unfortunately the reporter of *The Irish Times* was injured. His larger point was whether the meeting was illegal, and whether, even if illegal, the action of the Executive was justifiable. The hon. Member said that whether the meeting was legal or illegal, the Government ought not to have interfered with it. [Mr. PARNELL dissented.] Does the hon. Gentleman deny that he raised the point as to the legality of these meetings?

MR. PARNELL: I did not raise the question of the legality of the meeting.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I certainly understood the hon. Member to raise the question clearly, but I will take the questions in their order. I entirely differ from the hon. Gentleman with regard to the facts of Sunday's occurrences at Ennis. The hon. Gentleman has relied on the reports of two or three reporters present on the occasion, but the reporters were in the yard and could not possibly be eye-witnesses of what was proceeding outside—namely, the stone-throwing from the upper windows of the building. He has tried to distinguish between the crowd in the yard and those who were not in the yard, but you cannot make that distinction. They formed one body of men collected together for the same illegal purpose. Those in the yard, it is true, were not engaged in stone-throwing, but they were legally, morally, and actually part of the same crowd engaged in the same work. What occurred? Colonel Turner came to this building with his forces. According to the report in *The Freeman's Journal* a meeting had been held and a resolution had been already passed which of itself constituted the meeting illegal. As soon as Colonel Turner appeared before this building, where this unquestionably illegal meeting took place, stones were hurled at him from the upper windows. Colonel Turner then ordered—as he was bound to do under the circumstances—an assault to be made on the building. The police and military entered the building, and took into custody a certain number of persons, and these will be prosecuted in the ordinary course to-morrow.

MR. PARNELL: Would the right hon. Gentleman read the extract from Colonel Turner's report which bears upon this matter of the stone-throwing?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not the text of the report by me, but in any case I do not think it would be a proper course for me to read any part of the report to the House, as I might then, not unnaturally, be asked to lay the whole of it upon the Table, and this I could not do, as it is a confidential document. Stones were undoubtedly thrown, and a stone struck Colonel Turner's horse and his orderly. As illustrating the views and intentions of the persons engaged in this illegal meeting in this building, I may mention that stones piled up were found in the upper story prepared for a siege. They were not all exhausted in the process of stoning the police. I was glad to hear the hon. Gentleman express his righteous indignation at the practice of stone-throwing. Colonel Turner would have been failing in his duty if he had not taken immediate and effective steps to put an end to such an outrageous violation of the law. The hon. Member has laid down the theory that public meetings ought never to be stopped, but that, if they are illegal, subsequent prosecutions should be resorted to against those who were present. But that has never been the theory of any Government. It is a course which might occasionally be pursued, but it could not be followed universally, nor is it expedient, for, in many cases, the evils which it is sought to prevent would be past remedy, and the mischief would have been done. This meeting at Ennis was one of a number of illegal meetings which were organized to take place last Sunday, and which necessitated the accumulation of a considerable force in that part of the country. These forces were obliged to disperse by violence illegal assemblies in more than one part of Clare. When we remember what slight injuries were inflicted we must feel convinced that the police and military acted with judgment and control. It is absolutely impossible to have baton charges and so forth, which are necessary to disperse an assembly, without some injury being inflicted on some members of the crowd. I regret that such injuries are necessary, but I congratulate myself, and I think the House ought to congratulate itself, that, on the whole, these meetings were dispersed in Clare and Kerry with so few injuries and so little suffering caused. In so far as there was suffering, the responsibility rests upon those agitators who, in deliberate defiance of what they knew to be the law, asked their countrymen to engage in illegal transactions.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am not unaccustomed to questions of this kind being raised with regard to occurrences in Ireland, and when I was Chief Secretary I know it was my habit to watch very carefully the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) who raised the question, and to distinguish in that speech between the facts which he stated and which he said required explanation and any political principles which he laid down and with which the Government might differ. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has taken exactly the opposite course. If I may say so with respect, I do not think you, Sir, would have been justified in allowing the adjournment of the House to be moved if all that we were to have was a general peroration about law and order such as we have heard just now; but it was well worth while to have the adjournment of the House moved in order to have two or three specific points of extreme importance placed before the House and answered with greater precision than the right hon. Gentleman could indulge in within the limits of an answer to a Question. The hon. Member who moved the adjournment of the House relied not upon private information, but upon the statements of the reporters of three very leading papers of different politics, and he stated there was a crowd of people in the court-yard of a house whose names were being taken down by the police when they were charged by the police with batons, and that afterwards the hussars were let loose upon them. The explanation of the right hon. Gentleman is that heavy stones were thrown from the upper windows of the house into the street. That might possibly afford a satisfactory explanation for a chief magistrate who had lost his head, and who in a great hurry ordered the police to go into the yard in hostile array and clear the yard, and then ascend the stairs. But what explanation was it for sending the Cavalry into the yard? If the police were being brutally assaulted in the yard, that might justify the bringing of the Cavalry into the yard, but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary did not allege that the police were assaulted in the yard. He has absolutely given no explanation whatever for the Cavalry being sent among the people except that they wished to storm the upper stories. That is no explanation at all. It is, I think, a most serious thing to allow Cavalry loose upon a crowd. I am one of those who think that no force should be used except for the purpose to which it is adapted, and that troops should never be used with lethal and deadly weapons except those weapons are necessary. It is just possible that on certain occasions Cavalry may be advantageously used to back upon the people or press them in any desired direction, but on this occasion the Cavalry were told to draw their swords. [Mr. BALFOUR: No.] Well, then, they drew them without orders, for swords were undoubtedly drawn. I think the House has a right to ask for more specific information than has, so far, been given to it, and that, until such information is given, all general expressions about law and order, so far from increasing the respect of the Irish people for law and order and the confidence of England and Scotland that the law is being fairly and properly administered in Ireland, will only tend to diminish those two most wholesome feelings.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether I can at present supplement the information which I have given to the House. The right hon. Baronet seems to think that my speech consisted chiefly of peroration.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rise, Sir, to a point of Order. I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is not bound to confine himself strictly to facts and not to indulge in rhetoric?

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is only entitled to speak by the indulgence of the House, and he will, no doubt, confine himself to the question on account of which that indulgence was given.

Sir George Trevelyan

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In the first place, I stated that there was stone-throwing of a serious kind, both before and after the assault on the building.

MR. PARNELL: From the building?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, from the building.

MR. PARNELL: Not from the yard?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not so far as I know. Colonel Turner on the occasion of the first stone-throwing ordered an assault upon the house; that the crowd in the house and in the yard was one crowd gathered for one purpose; and that the soldiers were not ordered to charge as the right hon. Gentleman appears to think. I believe it to be true that one or two soldiers, irritated by the stone-throwing, did use the flats of their swords till they were stopped by their officers. That is the sum of the information—very briefly—which has reached me and which I have at my command. It seems to me to be strictly specific and clear, and if there are any further facts to be elicited, they will be elicited at the trial in the Court to-morrow.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.): I must compliment the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) upon the altered tone, and, I think, the somewhat lowered tone, of his boasts about his exploits in Ireland. I must do him the justice to say his speech appears to savour less of the jubilation of the banquet of last night than of the depression of the morning. He will find—the longer he lives the more he will learn—that the task of dragooning Ireland is not such a simple matter. The whole story of the right hon. Gentleman, I understand, rests upon the authority of a story supplied to him by Colonel Turner—the same Colonel Turner who supplied him with the story that the National League in the South-West of Ireland was a thing of the past. I will come in a moment to the value of Colonel Turner's testimony, and to the value of the right hon. Gentleman's own testimony. But now, assuming for one moment even the truth of Colonel Turner's story, I ask any Englishman who has listened to the right hon. Gentleman's statement, is this attack upon unarmed people an affair Englishmen will be proud of? Is it an affair any Englishman with a spark of humanity can listen to without feeling most heartily ashamed of it? Colonel Turner, in his telegram to a Dublin paper—*The Irish Times*—describes this yard into which these soldiers and Infantry and Hussars and Constabulary charged as "a densely-packed yard." Sir, can anything that the right hon. Gentleman has said in his few perfunctory observations to-night—can anything weaken the force of that admission of Colonel Turner that this was a densely-packed yard, into which that mass of armed men charged with savage ferocity? What possible necessity has the right hon. Gentleman shown for the charge into this yard? What proof has he given of the necessity of it? Here were a lot of men cooped up in the yard as in a closed trap. They were as helpless as, practically speaking, a lot of pigeons in a trap. There was not a firearm among them; and the right hon. Gentleman has not pretended that there was the smallest possibility of their offering one moment's serious resistance to the immense armed forces under Colonel Turner outside the gate waiting for them. What did he want to charge them at all for? I want to know what was Colonel Turner and his force afraid of? Seventy-five men, we hear, submitted to be arrested without any resistance. The right hon. Gentleman has not dared to say one resisted; and if these men could be arrested after this savage violence, why could they not have been arrested as they were leaving the building and their names were being taken? The very same thing happened at Loughrea. We held a meeting of the representatives of all the suppressed branches in Galway. A large force of police was in attendance in the street outside. They did not dare force their way into the place. They took the names of everybody who attended the meeting as they came out, and they went away satisfied, and so did we. I want to know why was not the same thing done at Ennis? As to this story of Colonel Turner's, that these people in the building or in the yard pelted showers of stones at the police, it is absurd and incredible on the face of it. If the police had come up before the meeting was held, or if the police had endeavoured to prevent it, it would be easy to understand their being attacked; but if there is one thing on which every newspaper man is agreed—and the right hon. Gentleman has not endeavoured to dispute it—it is the concordance of the newspaper testimony on the point that this meeting was all over before any collision at all took place. The people were leaving quietly by one exit, the gate of the yard. They had accomplished their purpose. They had held their meeting without any interruption whatever; and the idea of these men deliberately challenging a collision with this enormous armed force drawn up outside the gate, hemmed in as they were in the yard, without weapons, without the slightest chance of defence or of escape, why Colonel Turner's story, I submit to this House, is an insult to common sense. It is the story of a man who is driven to the wall for an excuse, or a man who imagines when it is a question of attacking and maltreating a defenceless Irish crowd, he, like every Irish official, imagines that no excuse is too preposterous to go down with the men who are ruling Ireland. On the face of it, on the internal evidence, without referring for one moment to the evidence—the crushing evidence—of all independent witnesses, of Conservative journalists and others, I hold the story of this alleged attack by the people who had held their meeting, and whose only interest would be to get themselves out of this *cul de sac*, is a palpable invention and fabrication, and it is because he feels that, that the attempt is made to bolster up his case by the statement heard to-day, for the first time, of the showers of stones coming from the windows of this building.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have previously made a statement to that effect in answering Questions put a day or two ago.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: I was not present when the right hon. Gentleman made the statement in his answer, but I read it in *The Times* newspaper—and that is an authority which the right hon. Gentleman will not question—and according to my reading of that answer, his statement was that showers of stones came also from neighbouring houses, which is a totally different thing. Anybody who knows the place, knows his position of to-day is an impossible one, and that it would have been impossible for showers to come from the windows without the persons in the yard seeing and being cognizant of them. But is it for one moment to be held or tolerated that because stones are thrown from windows of neighbouring places that these cavalry men are to be at liberty to lay about with sabres and bayonets among a perfectly defenceless crowd, who, in the position they were in, in that archway, would have been downright lunatics to have provoked a collision? I hold that the right hon. Gentleman's position to-day is a thoroughly new one, and Colonel Turner knows perfectly well that it is quite indefensible. But I will even admit for a moment that there is some truth in the story that stones were thrown by persons from the windows; but I ask this House to ask themselves "Where are the killed and wounded?" The right hon. Gentleman states now that Colonel Turner's orderly and horse were struck by a stone, and that is the full extent of the catastrophe sustained by this huge armed force on the street and which rushed in through the gate. That is all which is to justify him in hurling this force on a defenceless and unarmed crowd, and it is on the strength of this incident that all this violence and onslaught is perpetrated. If there is any sort of reality in this attack, the Government have a right to be able to produce some evidence that somebody or another has been injured. If this is not forthcoming, let them take care of the lesson that statements like that of the right hon. Gentleman and like those defences which are constantly put forward by him in the House will teach the Irish police that they may perpetrate all sorts of barbarities of this kind with the most perfect impunity. The Irish police officers are paid immense and sumptuous salaries—they have really no risk to endure but the risk they incur on an occasion such as this—men to whom you give deadly weapons to protect themselves with, and men among whom I venture to say there are fewer lives lost and fewer injuries sustained than in any body of railway servants or firemen or any other body of men in the world, and certainly very much less than among Irish Pressmen, who have to perform their duties under circumstances such as this, and who do not grumble nor try to kill anyone when they are injured. I tell you that the feeling amongst policemen that they are Sovereigns over the people is rife enough already in Ireland. I say the lives of these men are never in danger, and how different did the police act to the soldiers. Last Sunday in Loughrea I saw a soldier struck on the breast with a stone, and he laughed good humouredly and said—"It's a very bad shot." A stone passed near the head of a policeman, though it did not strike him, for he was beside me, and I could see it, and he instantly raised his rifle and took deliberate aim at a person in the direction from which the stone had come. The fact is, this brutality on the part of the police is not for one moment to protect themselves, but simply to strike terror into and to wreak vengeance upon the people because the people have outwitted them, because they have defeated them, and because they have exposed their failure to suppress the local branches of the National League and exposed the falsehood which was attempted to be palmed off upon this House that the National League was crushed. I say whatever wretched story is fished up now about this miserable stone-throwing, I will ask will any man—and I see there are soldiers in this House, and there is at least one sailor—will any brave man or any soldier stand up now and defend the action of the man who gave that cowardly and cruel order to the soldiers and police to dash into the midst of those defenceless people and to hack and slash them with their batons and sabres? For my own part, I deeply regret that apparently these particular soldiers took rather kindly to their orders. I am sorry for it, and I think it is a stain on the profession of a soldier; for I say it cordially that my own experience of soldiers acting in Ireland is very different, and the right hon. Gentleman may yet find that it is rather awkward for him to see in the future regiment set against regiment in opposite camps on these political questions in Ireland. I do not blame the soldiers. The right hon. Gentleman told us this moment that they were restrained by their officers. But what is the fact? They were headed by their officers, and they were marched through the streets of that wretched town of Ennis yelling "Rule Britannia"—[*Cheers*]—aye, gloating over the unarmed people; gloating and exulting over them and insulting them. It would have been as brave for them to have sung "Rule Britannia" after a pigeon-shooting match. I am sorry, as I said, for it; but I do not blame the soldiers, for the soldiers were only setting the right hon. Gentleman's Irish policy to music. They were just giving a rude rendering in music to the sneers and jibes at the Irish people in which he indulges in this House and out of it. Colonel Turner had on Tuesday the audacity to send a telegram to Dublin expressing his regrets for the misconduct of the military; but he would have been much better employed in apologizing and expressing regret for his own misconduct, for it was he alone who was responsible for the disgraceful and dastardly scene of last Sunday. It was he who sent the Hussars in after the police, and the Infantry after the Hussars, to dash in and attack those unfortunate people; but the secret of this man's brutality and panic on the occasion is not very far to find. It was he alone who provoked this whole series of demonstrations of last Sunday. It was on his authority, I dare say, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary committed himself in this House to that fatal assurance that the National League was a thing of the past. To cover his own incompetency and failure to suppress the local branches of the National League, and the meetings which are held every week in every parish in Clare, and in order to cover his own incompetency, Colonel Turner represented, I dare say, to the right hon. Gentleman—for I do the right hon. Gentleman the justice of believing that he had some information as a foundation for his statement—that there were bogus meetings, and he trusted to the power of the local police terrorism to prevent people from giving him the lie in the open daylight. That was Colonel Turner's position. Luckily for us, however, he is a clumsy tactician. While Colonel Turner was getting the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to stand up in this House and say that those meetings reported to be held weekly in Clare were bogus meetings, Colonel Turner was himself giving the lie to himself and the right hon. Gentleman by going about Clare, and threatening to quarter extra police in every parish from which the newspaper in Dublin published a report of meetings which the right hon. Gentleman asserted never took place. Between Colonel Turner's action in Clare and the right hon. Gentleman's statements in this House on his authority there is a discrepancy which can only be accounted for on the theory that there is a lie somewhere—a shabby and scandalous lie. Because these Sunday meetings brought that question to a test, because Colonel Turner found himself convicted of having uttered a falsehood, an untruth, and a fraud to this House and to the English people, and because he found himself outwitted and defeated in endeavouring even to prevent this very meeting in Ennis—that is why Colonel Turner lost his head. The Nationalist Party have hitherto spared Colonel Turner. He was a Home Ruler of the Home Rulers, if not something more. He was a wretched creature, and the best excuse I ever heard for him was that he had a large family unprovided for, and that his situation was in danger owing to the extent to which he had championed the League and to which he had made public his feelings and views on the Irish Nationalist cause. I presume he was now re-established himself in the confidence of Dublin Castle, for he is now acting in its service with all the zeal of a renegade. He has now taken up his quarters in Clare. This most impartial instrument of the Government, who is supposed to make no distinction, to know no difference between man and man, has taken up his quarters in Clare in the mansion of one of the most detested exponents of cruel and rack-renting landlordism—Mr. Stackpole, of Eden Bay. I will not say anything more about him. [*Cries of* "Go on."] It is possible that I might go on, and very materially add to the evidences of this gentleman's unfitness for the position assigned to him if there were occasion for doing so, but there is not. If there was ever any suspicion in Dublin Castle—as I believe there was—that Colonel Turner was secretly in favour of the National League, and if that suspicion was strengthened by his ridiculous reports as to the suppression of the organization, his conduct on Sunday has relieved him of the imputation, and is surely sufficient to prove him a worthy servant of the Executive Government in Ireland. I will say no more about Colonel Turner; I will leave him to his own reflections as a person who was once a soldier and an honourable man. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has challenged us, by his usual policy—I will not say prudence—to hold those meetings of last Sunday, and he has spoken as to the illegality of such gatherings. Now, I do not give any opinion about their legality or their illegality. I assert that there is nothing that we can do, nothing that an Irish Nationalist can say or do at this present moment in Ireland, that may not be made illegal if the right hon. Gentleman sends down an order from Dublin Castle. I, therefore, offer no opinion as to their legality, but I know there is something higher than legality, and that is truth; and I know that the object of these meetings was to establish truth as to a matter of fact, which it is of the greatest possible importance, both to the English and to the Irish people, should be cleared up. And I am here to say that, whatever the legality of Sunday's meetings may be, they have cleared up that matter once and for all; and if the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members opposite were not satisfied with the evidence, and should still consider that the evidence on that point is still incomplete, I can tell him and them that we will go on with these meetings, and we will pile proof until there will be no room for doubt as to the existence and activity and energy of the League, even to the most Archaic Tory mind. The right hon. Gentleman has challenged us. He has pledged his authority in the face of this House to an assertion—which every man, woman, and child in the suppressed districts knows to be deliberately at variance from truth—namely, that the Land League is suppressed in Clare. He would have made political capital for himself by that statement if uncontradicted and unrefuted. It is quite possible that it might have shut up the English people in a fool's paradise about Ireland for many a day, and may have involved many a year of struggle and misery in Ireland, aye of murder and crime, to undo the effect of that untruth. But the Irish people gave their answer to it last Sunday, in the only way open to them by which they could make the truth reach the hearts and ears of the people of England and Scotland—the only way except that which the hon. and learned Attorney General for England (Sir Richard Webster) seems to prefer, by retiring into secret societies and answering by murder, midnight lodges, and outrages. They delivered their answer last Sunday in open daylight, in the face of most villainous and cowardly police intimidation; and in doing that they exposed themselves to the brutality of men like Colonel Turner. They exposed themselves to 20,000 or 30,000 prosecutions that will follow if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has the courage of his convictions. I say, Sir, it is a most cruel and deplorable thing that the Irish people should be obliged to subject themselves to those risks week after week in order to establish a truth which is as notorious in Ireland as the noonday sun. It is lamentable, I say, that the English people—and the character of England—should so easily let themselves be made the victim of every ridiculous boast the right hon. Gentleman makes in this House in response to the provocative representations of the London Press. I hope Englishmen will not much longer stand by and allow the Irish people to be subjected to such barbarities of the kind as were enacted on Sunday simply because they are endeavouring to establish the truth. So long as there is a shred of life or liberty left, it will not be the fault of the Irish people if every man in England and Scotland is not made to feel that the right hon. Gentleman's task as coercionist of Ireland is not done, but only beginning; and that when he and his policy exists only in the memory of man, and those wretched barbarities will have vanished into the things of the past, the National League in Ennis and in Ireland will thrive and live, and will yet conquer in Ireland.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he was not quite sure that, as the case now stood, further discussion was likely to lead any further towards a conclusion. He was not at all surprised at the vehemence with which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. W. O'Brien) had spoken. He (Mr. John Morley) was sure in all quarters of the House it must be felt during the statement of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and the counter statement of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the

Chief Secretary, that the affair at Ennis on Sunday, whatever might be urged to the contrary, as regarded the rights of parties, was a matter of great importance. They could not wonder that the occurrence in Ireland was felt to be one of importance, and he should be very much surprised if the people in England and Scotland did not also feel the importance of it. He wanted the House to consider the position in which it stood in reference to this matter. The hon. Member for the City of Cork read statements from three newspaper correspondents giving their impression of the events which passed before them on Sunday last, and the Chief Secretary then rose and gave what he (Mr. John Morley) thought the House believed to be a most meagre and perfunctory reply. He wanted to ask him whether he could or could not produce some report from Colonel Turner as to what actually took place. It was quite obvious there was a great deal of contested matter, and that there were statements on one side which had not apparently been brought to Colonel Turner's knowledge, and with which the Chief Secretary did not deal. He was quite aware of the official reserve which guarded communications to the Government, and he was not at all anxious that it should be indiscreetly broken through. He was, however, going to make two requests to the right hon. Gentleman. First, he asked that he should produce to the House some report from his officers and agents which would enable the House to test and measure the version of the occurrence given by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. The second suggestion he would urge upon him was rather wider than that. The House had heard a great deal of Mitchelstown, and although the Chief Secretary at the beginning of the Session charged them with having forgotten Mitchelstown, he (Mr. John Morley) told him then, and he would tell him again now, that in thinking so he was labouring under a great mistake. What they asked the Chief Secretary to do in regard to Mitchelstown, and which he had not done, he now asked him to do in the case of Ennis. During the time he (Mr. John Morley) was Irish Chief Secretary, there was only one grave trouble in Ireland, and that was in Belfast. Serious rioting took place in Belfast, and some hon. Gentlemen now sitting behind the Chief Secretary were in no small degree responsible for the events of that time, and they talked of him (Mr. John Morley) as the present Chief Secretary might now complain of being talked about by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. What did he do? He did not stay in London and go to banquets to explain to his political friends that the Irish Question was a huge joke. He went over to Ireland, and within three or four days of the occurrences of which complaint was made, with the ready consent of the Lord Lieutenant, he directed that the House be informed that a Commission of Inquiry should be held. If they were going to have a repetition of these occurrences of Sunday last—and he was afraid from the policy they were pursuing that they were not unlikely going to have them—if the Chief Secretary was going to indulge in these childish and provocative boasts in this House, if this policy was to be pursued, and if these incidents were to recur time after time, he submitted, in the interests of law and order, which they professed to be so anxious for, and to satisfy the public mind in this country, as well as to give the people in Ireland some excuse for believing that the action of the police was impartially and discreetly directed, it could only be done by means of a Commission of Inquiry. The Government had a precedent in the Belfast case, and he asked them to now do in regard to Ennis what they had managed to evade in the case of Mitchelstown.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he considered the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as absolutely unsatisfactory. It was a most serious thing that Cavalry should be ordered to charge upon people under any circumstances whatever, but for Cavalry to be ordered to charge against unarmed people in a courtyard demanded the most ample discussion. It was miraculous that so little damage was done under the circumstances. It was a really important fact for the House to remember that the statement of facts presented by his hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was based on the reports of every single newspaper correspondent on the spot at the time. These newspaper correspondents all united in saying that no missile was thrown before the charge was ordered, and if their statement was true a more infamous act was never done by a magistrate than the sending by Colonel Turner of horse and foot soldiers into the yard. The answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if they accepted it as true, was most preposterous on the face of it, and could not hold water for a single moment. The right hon. Gentleman had said that preparations were made by the crowd in the building to stand a siege by the military and police, and that it had been piled up with stones for that purpose, and that as soon as Colonel Turner appeared with the military they were received with stones from the top window of the building; but in support of that statement the right hon. Gentleman was not able to allege one single scratch as evidence. Could any hon. Member believe that the people were so eager to withstand the police as to take a small building, and deliberately barring the door, seek to defend it without any arms against a force of 250 armed men? He knew his countrymen very well, and, while he was not in the habit of calling them cowards, yet nothing had occurred in recent years which would justify the idea that the Irish people were such idiots as to believe that unarmed they could defend a small place against 250 armed men. They knew, from past experience at Mitchelstown and other places, when a policeman got so much as a cut on his little finger, the police were ready to say that they had been generally struck with stones, but when not one of the police had complained, they were forced to the conclusion that no man last Sunday on the side of the forces of the Crown was even struck. The statement that stones were thrown before the police went into the yard was also preposterous. Now, look at the behaviour on the other side. Two of the newspaper correspondents represented Unionist organs, and one a Nationalist journal, and they all corroborated each other. He would point out that the Government had received no report of an official of the Crown which could be compared with the statements made by the hon. Member for Cork, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was forced to take as his authority Colonel Turner, the very man whose conduct was impugned. He asked if it was to be laid down as an accepted principle of the House that when charges of the most serious kind were made on the faith of independent testimony against officials of the Crown in Ireland, the accusers were to be met with only the sort of denial of those officials the House had just listened to, to be sneered at, and to have absolutely no satisfaction given to the people? This was a most serious state of affairs, and the effect of it would be to induce the people to resist the officers of the law. He asked hon. Members if they realized what would be the result of such proceedings? When the people at Mitchelstown resisted the officers of the law, and hunted them into their barracks, everything they complained of was remedied by the Government. During the Mitchelstown debate the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in his lofty and most sneering style, said it was a most intolerable thing that the officers of the law in Ireland should have to ask the promoters of meetings for accommodation for a Government reporter at Nationalist meetings. What was then so described had been systematically done ever since that date. Why, he (Mr. Dillon), at a meeting he attended last Sunday—and for which he believed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was after issuing a warrant for his arrest—he was approached by the officers of the police and asked would he protect the police reporter; and he said —"Most certainly I will;" and there were several present. The lesson the Government were teaching the Irish people was that if they successfully resisted the officers of the law they would be listened to; but if they did not they would be ridden down by Hussars, bayoneted by foot soldiers, and then arrested and handcuffed together. He warned the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that his sneers and after-dinner speeches would not carry on the Government of Ireland, although they might do for the Tory Party. The right hon. Gentleman was now entering upon a course which was widening and making more unbridgeable the chasm which separated the officers of the law and the people of Ireland, who had lost all confidence in the administration of the law, and had ceased to regard the police as their friends. If this brutal system were carried on the Government would inevitably increase the feeling. He maintained that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was bound, if he had any adequate idea of his responsibility in the Office he now held, to meet the Irish Party on two or three points. He was bound to explain whether the police, when they went into the yard, were resisted by the people, whether any attempt was made by the people to resist arrest or to refuse to give their names; and if the police were not resisted he was bound to say why horse soldiers were sent into a confined space like that with the most terrible risk. He had not answered those questions, and had made a futile effort to explain away the statement of the newspaper correspondents that Colonel Turner's words to the soldiers were—"Draw your swords and clear them out of the yard." He wished to refer to the responsibility which was taken by a magistrate. Suppose the police drew their sabres without any excuse, and the people threw a stone which struck the soldiers, could such an operation be carried out without much bloodshed or a tremendous and serious loss of life? The importance of this question they must keep in their minds—not what did occur, but what might have occurred. It proved how peaceable the people must have been that such a military operation was carried through without serious loss of life. It was partly with a view to prevent, if possible, the repetition of such proceedings that they brought this matter before the House. In his opinion these proceedings on the part of Colonel Turner ought to result in his being removed from the County of Clare. The hon. Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane) said it was of great importance that Colonel Turner, forgetful of every consideration of decency and what was becoming to his office, had taken his course and had taken up his quarters and was living at the expense of the chief land agent in Clare. He who was there to do justice between all classes was seen to be riding about the county of Clare in Dick Stackpoole's carriage and obeying his orders instead of those of the Government. He had in the last month turned the police into soldiers—into liveried servants of Stackpoole. That was an outrage which was liable to provoke violence and resistance to the law. In the whole district in which he was placed, what peasant of Clare could believe that he had to deal with an impartial administration of the law under such circumstances? He (Mr. Dillon) would make an earnest appeal to the hon. Members of the House whether they considered it was fair or just to the people of Ireland that this officer should be allowed to carry on such operations, and to lead to such tremendous risks of loss of life as Colonel Turner did at Ennis on last Sunday, and to remain at the same time the guest of one of the chief land agents in Clare? Colonel Turner was a most obnoxious and unpopular man.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): Sir, I should not have taken up the time of the House even for a few minutes if the Rule of the House allowed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to reply to the remarks that have been made by hon. Members. Now, with reference to the speech and the remarks addressed to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), I would ask does he seriously mean to contend for a moment that the occurrences at Belfast to which he referred have the slightest resemblance to, or can afford in any way a precedent regarding what has taken place at Ennis? We know that for days riot had been going on at Belfast which were attended with loss of life.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I said that for three days the riots had been going on after the Commission had been issued.

Mr. MADDEN: I am quite aware that after the Commission there was rioting; but the rioting had been going on for days and days before; but does the right hon. Gentleman mean to contend that what had taken place for three days before the Commission was directed to Belfast had the slightest resemblance to the occurrences in the yard at Ennis? With reference to the suggestion which has been made that the report which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has received upon the subject of the occurrences of last Sunday should be read, it would involve the consequence of its being laid on the Table of the House. It is the fact that during the tenure of Office of the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) there were collisions between the police and the people which led to injury and sometimes to loss of life; and the Government will see what precedent exists in relation to those occurrences for taking the course which is suggested. Now, Sir, I certainly do think that anybody who listened to the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), and who drew a mental picture of the occurrences in the yard at Ennis, will find it was one compared with which the reality would fall very far short. The hon. Member speaks of barbarity, of savagery, and of the military hacking and slashing with sabres. Now, if that be the impression on the mind of the hon. Member, I certainly would be disposed to put a question which he put in reference to the stone throwing, and say, "Where is your list of killed and wounded?"

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: They took very good care to conceal the wounds from the police.

Mr. MADDEN: Then, if they took care to conceal the wounds from the police, I ask the House to judge of the correctness of the picture which has been drawn. I do not think the House will be much impressed by a statement of that kind. Has anyone been seriously injured? Is there anybody in hospital or infirmary as the result of the operation which was found to be necessary for clearing this yard? I think that affords a very fair test that the operation was done with reasonable care and caution, and the result has been that no proof has been given that anybody has been seriously injured. The hon. Member who moved the adjournment of the House (Mr. Parnell) has said he would not inquire into the legality or the illegality of the meeting. I will follow his example, but I ask the House for a moment to realize the position. There was a house, and a yard to that house. That yard, according to the statement read by the hon. Member, was closely packed with people. This house contained a still unexhausted store of ammunition consisting of large stones. The people in the house and in the houses opposite went on throwing stones at the military and the police as they passed by. So far as regards the illegal meeting that might possibly have been dealt with in the manner suggested by hon. Members opposite by taking the names of those present. But as regards the serious danger of stone throwing, that had to be put a stop to, and it could not be done without clearing the yard. Then what was to be done? Orders were given to clear the building, and if that was not done, the military and police would have been actually at the mercy of the persons who had the control of these large stones. You could not do it without clearing the yard. Now, Sir, as to the statement that there was a charge of cavalry—that is not the fact. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has stated what occurred. The use of sabres—the backs of sabres—was resorted to under circumstances of great provocation; but the officers at once put a stop to it, and it was discontinued. With reference to these occurrences, I can hardly add to the statements which were laid before the House by the Chief Secretary; but I submit that the authorities dealt prudently and effectively with a very serious state of things.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Although I am not satisfied with the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down, I shall endeavour to deal with it so as to make the best of it, and to extract from it as much good as I can—from motives which I am sure in part actuated my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley)—that we are especially desirous on the present occasion to bring this discussion to a close in order to go forward with the very important question appointed for the regular business of the evening. I must notice two things, at any rate, in the speech we have just heard, because I think, if our fears are reasonable, even if further inquiry be made by the Government, that inquiry will be approached, if judged by the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman, with an inadequate sense of the importance and gravity of the matters we are discussing. It is quite plain, after hearing that statement, that the subject we are debating is exceedingly important, and that for the due examination of it the circumstances are perfectly incomplete. The due examination of precedents is of great importance; but the allegations are so grave and the contradictions so serious that it is the absolute duty of the Government and of the House to prosecute the matter until we can really have full and authentic information of the occurrences on this unfortunate occasion. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that this was an occasion of much less magnitude and moment than the occurrences at Belfast, into which my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle granted a public inquiry. In one sense it is so, because I believe there had been only the loss of a single life at Belfast at the time when the public inquiry was granted. [*Murmurs of dissent from the Ministerial side.*] I am not quite certain, but I believe there was only one single life lost. Certainly the proceedings were taken at the beginning, and not after a long series of proceedings. But there is another point of view to be considered. This is a question much graver even than the riots at Belfast. The riots at Belfast were disturbances between two opposing parties, with respect to whom the object was to ascertain who was to blame, but there was no imputation on the public authority of any kind. But here, setting aside the stone-throwing, and setting aside the simple illegality of the meeting, which is also a distinct question, it is the public authorities, and the public authorities alone, that stand arraigned. That appears to me to give an exceedingly grave character to the present proceedings. Again, the hon. and learned Member said, with regard to the charging of the Cavalry, that it was necessary to obtain access to the house—and I perfectly agree as to the propriety of obtaining it, even by force if necessary, but not as to the necessity of sending troops into the yard. Was it a rational proceeding to send a body of Cavalry into a yard with regard to which we have it from Colonel Turner himself that it was densely packed? Then the hon. and learned Gentleman says that the Cavalry did not charge; but he is aware that on this matter accounts differ, and we ought to have the matter cleared up. In his speech the hon. and learned Gentleman said that there was no charge of Cavalry, but that one or two of the men unfortunately made use of their weapons under extreme provocation. Now, Sir, what was this extreme provocation? Was it stone-throwing? If there had been violent stone throwing on the level, I might understand some hasty proceedings on the part of the Cavalry; but because there had been stone-throwing outside the yard, therefore the Solicitor General says that there was extreme provocation, which went far to justify and excuse the men, and to account for the use of their weapons by the Cavalry soldiers within the yard against a body of men who had taken no part in the stone-throwing. I must express a hope that the Government will not go into the consideration of a further inquiry with a disposition to minimize the importance of these transactions. It is a question in which the conduct of the public authorities is concerned in the gravest manner. If, as we hope may be the case, the reports which the authorities have given are proved to be true, we shall be considerably consoled. But, if the statements which the hon. Member for Cork has made on the concurrent and consistent testimony of three reporters of important public journals, who did not write from the same political point of view, be substantiated, then it certainly appears to me, without having consulted any legal authority upon the question, that in that case the conduct of the Public Authorities at Ennis will be open to the charge not simply of a want of humanity, prudence, or policy, but of gross illegality similar to that which disgraced the conduct of the Constabulary at Mitchelstown. I hope that the allegations of the newspaper correspondents will be disproved; but they have been made with a degree of responsibility, and even authority, from the concurrence of so many witnesses, which gives to them an exceeding gravity when the importance of the allegations themselves is considered. The hon. and learned Gentleman appears to suppose that there is a disposition on the part of my right hon. Friend near me to press for the production of a confidential Report which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said he was not prepared to lay upon the Table. I will only say, on behalf of my right hon. Friend, that he had no such desire whatever. What we want is to get to the bottom of the facts. The hon. and learned Member has promised that the Government will seriously consider what further steps, if any, they will take for the purpose of elucidating the whole matter. That being so——

Mr. MADDEN: As a matter of fact the statement which I made was not what the right hon. Gentleman supposes. In reference to the suggestion as regards the Report, I said we would examine the precedents which had occurred, and see what can be done as to making public the Report. My promise was not of such a general character as the right hon. Gentleman suggests.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Perhaps, Sir, it was my extreme desire to put a favourable interpretation on his words, and to avoid a Division, that made me construe too liberally the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman; but still there was, at any rate, a disposition to consider whether information should be produced which has not yet been laid before us, and of which we know nothing but fragments conveyed to us across the Table. I could not pledge myself to be contented with the production of documents of such a kind. What I would press on the Government is this—that we are bound in duty to get to the bottom of this case. I do not now say how we are to do so, but we are bound to ascertain and elucidate the case. It is far too grave a matter to be treated as trivial, and it ought on no account to be hushed up. I hope that the Government will give us its aid in this matter, and, as in the Belfast Riots, so in this case they will themselves become the primary agents in the investigation. It is not merely a question of harshness, severity, or imprudence, but a possible charge of illegality, and that is a matter with regard to which I think we have a right to ask that the Government shall give us their aid in instituting a most efficient inquiry. As to the production of documents, for the moment I wait for the opinion of the Government on that subject. Something they have promised us; let us wait for that, and let us take no hostile measure at the present moment; let us refrain even from the formal manifestation of dissatisfaction by dividing the House on the question of the Adjournment. But I think it right to give notice that should the information given to us by the Government be anything short of a full and satisfactory elucidation of the entire matter, the Government must not suppose that this matter has terminated or that it can terminate at the point where it now stands. It will be matter of solemn and sacred obligation with us to prosecute it further, and to learn the real merits of the case in justice alike to the welfare of the people of Ireland and to the honour of the Government, which is deeply involved in this matter.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, this was a matter of extreme seriousness to the Irish Party, and they were extremely grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for giving the statement he had made. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had said there was no charge alleged; but he (Mr. Healy) thought a charge of Cavalry was enough. Then, as to the charge of illegality, he (Mr. Healy) was extremely cautious not to do anything illegal; but the Government could easily hire men for £2 or £3 a-week to say that he had been guilty of an illegality. Was it not a reasonable thing, when a Ministerial statement was made which admitted of only one effective mode of disproof—namely, the assembly of the organization that was declared to be a thing of the past, and to have been wiped out of existence—that that assembly should be called together. The League assembled in its peaceful multitudes, and it did so in order to prove whether the Chief Secretary's statement was true or false. A Minister had made a statement that was overwhelmingly absurd—he would not say false, for that would not be allowed—and the League had taken the only means in their power to prove that it was untrue. Of course, they were aware that it was in the power of the Chief Secretary to put their lives in peril, and to take their liberties away in so doing. They were told that it was hard to argue with the master of many legions, but it was harder still to argue with the master of many Resident Magistrates. He would put it to the House whether it was fair of the Chief Secretary to make the statement he did, and then, when they tried to disprove it, subject them to the risk of being murdered? The Chief Secretary could have prevented it all by holding his tongue. He (Mr. Balfour) said that the Nationalists had brought what occurred on themselves; but he (Mr. Healy) retorted that the Chief Secretary brought it on them. It was his folly and foolish braggart statement that had brought about what had occurred. The National League simply arranged for a plebiscite or poll of the people on Sunday to prove that the Ministerial statement was false. They took the only means in their power. He (Mr. Healy) had himself no great fault to find with the police, so far as they came under his notice on Sunday last. He was at Kanturk, and there the police were not commanded by cadets who were appointed solely on account of their blue blood. They were commanded by what the University cadets called a "ranker"—that was, a man who had risen from the ranks; a man of the people like themselves. County Inspector Carey, the man in question, acted with much judgment, and no great harm was done. Those who assembled there did so with no idea whatever of resisting the police, for they were not such fools. They assembled, so to speak, to take a poll merely on the statement of the Chief Secretary. The moment they were asked to disperse, they were moved more easily than a mob in Regent Street or Charing Cross would be. They knew the police were armed with powder and ball, and therefore there was no idea of resistance. With regard to the use of the bayonets and the Cavalry charge he regretted that Colonel Turner, with whom at one time he (Mr. Healy) was on friendly terms, when an aide-de-camp to Lord Aberdeen, should have been mixed up in such a matter in the initial stage of a massacre in fact. The Government refused inquiry. The Chief Secretary in his speech the previous evening, with that curious intellectual side in his character so characteristic of him, said that he felt great interest in Ireland. Well, he (Mr. Balfour) was an object of interest to Irishmen, although they could not say that they had any great affection for or doted on him.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is not now discussing a matter of urgent public importance. The merits of the Chief Secretary have nothing to do with the Adjournment of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY (continuing) said, the Chief Secretary, with that remarkable way of twisting statements that was so peculiar to him, was in direct conflict with the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland as to the legality of the meetings. The right hon. Gentleman said that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had put the legality or illegality of these meetings at issue. The Solicitor General for Ireland admitted that his (Mr. Healy's) hon. Friend had done nothing of the kind. But the Chief Secretary, knowing that their legality or illegality must be decided to-morrow by one of his own magistrates, gave them what was known in London slang as "a friendly lead." All over Ireland those who read the Chief Secretary's words, and where they would pass current for good law, it would be taken that the meetings were illegal. The 84 Resident Magistrates would take it as good sound Saxonian learning, and they would all decide that the meetings were illegal. The right hon. Gentleman would have been better advised if he had abstained from giving the magistrates that advice as his official opinion. He wished to allude now to a matter which had in it the germs of future mischief, and that was to the objectionable singing of "Rule Britannia" by the military. He did not object to the song being sung by the British Army, even until they were hoarse, and he believed that after dinner the British Army was very fond of singing it. That was not objectionable even to the majority of Irish ears, and he had no objection to a ballad the words of which he was wholly unacquainted with. It was the same with the majority of his countrymen, so that it was impossible the song could have any offensiveness to them. It all depended upon the sense and the circumstances under which the song was sung at Ennis, apparently with the sanction of Colonel Turner. There was a song formerly sung in Ireland, called "Croppies lie down," and it was intended to be objectionable to a particular part of the community; and if the soldiers sang "Rule Britannia" for the same purpose of offending the people, and showed that such was their intention by their gestures and demeanour, that was quite a different matter. They sang the song at Ennis on Sunday when marching through the streets while the people were at worship, and a second time after the arrest of the 75 prisoners, and, as he said, with the deliberate purpose of offending the people. He saw the Secretary of State for War in his place, and he wished to make an appeal to him. The Army was very popular in Ireland, and, undoubtedly the people liked the soldiers, who gave them very little trouble. There were, however, English and Irish regiments, and he was sorry to see, in this morning's newspapers, that there had been a row between English and Irish regiments. Once you began this sort of thing you did not know where it would end, and it was a characteristic of Irishmen that whenever they thought an insult was offered to their country, were it even so far as the North Pole, it was felt and resented by the Irish race always. Officers then should not begin to lead off the chorus. He would commend to the right hon. Gentleman and the House the wisdom of acting with a little common sense in the matter. It was in the interests of prudence and policy that he recommended the Government to use some little wisdom in dealing with Ireland. The people of Ireland at the present had their ears and their hearts open in sympathy with the English people, and whilst they reciprocated every kindness they resented every insult. In all these matters, whether it was Ennis or Mitchelstown, they should grant an inquiry and let the people see that justice was absolutely impartial, and that whether the malefactor was Colonel Turner or John Smith, he would be liable to equal punishment. It was because they did not show the Irish people that there was that equal justice that they hated and detested the present *régime.*

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In order, Sir, to prevent any misconception with regard to the statements made on behalf of the Government, I think it right to explain. The right hon. Gentleman opposite and the hon. and learned Member who has just spoken appear to think that we have promised to lay the results of an inquiry on the Table of the House. That, however, is not the case, and it is just as well to have the thing quite clear. What we have promised is to consider whether the statement referred to can with propriety be laid on the Table of the House, and to consider that question in the light of what has previously been done in the cases of collisions of a more serious character between the people and the police in Ireland.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I only wish to say, Sir, that a very important precedent occurred when I was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and that was the death of a young man who was killed at Dromore in consequence of a meeting held there. In that case the facts were put before the House and the country, first before the country in the newspapers, and afterwards before the House very plainly in a long debate. My impression is that an inquiry was refused with the consent of the right hon. Gentleman who then sat on this Bench, and I remember especially that amongst others Viscount Cross decidedly applauded the refusal of an inquiry, because there was no doubt about the facts on either side. If that is a precedent on which reliance is to be placed, I do not think it is a proper one. If any desire had been shown on these Benches for an inquiry on that occasion, I think it would have been granted.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) said, in the case of the Belfast riots a Royal Commission was not granted until after a number of lives had been lost, nor were the disturbances in Belfast occasioned by malefactors, but were largely owing to the action of the police themselves and their attitude towards one section of the people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I do not think the hon. Gentleman is keeping to a definite matter of urgent public importance.

Mr. DE COBAIN said, he could bear personal testimony that in the case of the Belfast riots the action of the police was utterly and palpably——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is out of Order in discussing the Belfast riots.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I may say that my authority as to what I have said is to be found in the Report of the Royal Commission.

Mr. DE COBAIN: I am well aware he founds his remarks on what is called the Report of the Royal Commission, but that Commission was very unsatisfactory.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, that questions of this kind placed him in greater difficulty than any other questions which came before the House. He had, however, experienced no difficulty in deciding in his own mind as to the necessity for an inquiry into the Belfast riots, because many lives were lost, hundreds of people injured, and thousands of pounds worth of property destroyed. Neither would he have had any difficulty as to the Mitchelstown affair, but in this case he asked what was to be inquired into. Was it the legality of the meeting? If so, then he submitted the case was one for a Court of Law, and not for the House of Commons. Was it the fact of the meeting itself? They had before them reports from three different newspapers, and the case was practically this—that one reporter was assaulted and injured, and there was no record of a single man who had gone to hospital or who appeared to be injured by police or soldiers.

Mr. PARNELL said, that the reporters mentioned that people bore marks of the batons of the constables.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, if in this case men had been killed or seriously injured he would have voted with hon. Members below the Gangway in favour of a public inquiry. As to sending Cavalry into the yard, he was not sure that the use of Cavalry under circumstances like these was not better than the use of other force. He could quite understand that a body of horse soldiers dispersed a crowd much better than a body of policemen. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) asked what more terrific responsibilty could there be than that of ordering the soldiers to enter the yard. There was only one responsibility more terrific, and that was convening the people in such circumstances. Under these circumstances he should have to vote against the Motion of the hon. Member for Cork if he pressed it to a Division.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: The Government, without binding themselves as to form, have said they will take care that we shall be placed in possession of full and authentic information of the whole merits of this case. I now understand the Government to limit that statement, and that they by no means intend to convey to us that they will assist us in the examination of the case. In the circumstances I feel bound to withdraw the recommendation I made that no Division should be taken.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 179; Noes 249: Majority 70.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Barry, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bradlaugh, C.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Colman, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Davies, W.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Forster, Sir C.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Graham, R. C.
Grey, Sir E.
Gully, W. C.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, T. M.
Howell, G.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lewis, T. P.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Lagan, P.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon E.
Menzies, R. S.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Kelly, J.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.

Priestley, B.
Pyne, J. D.
Randell, D.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Roe, T.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Samuelson, G. B.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheehy, D.
Simon, Sir J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Parnell, C. S.
Reid, R. T.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, W.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brown, A. H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, A. C.
Corbett, J.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, Sir W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. H. W.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fulton, J. F.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, right hon. G. J.
Granby, Marquess of
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hambro, Col. C. J. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marquess of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jennings, L. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Ker, R. W. B.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Mallock, R.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Matthews, right hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.

Norton, R.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Price, Captain G. E.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, right hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Sellar, A. C.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[Bill 128.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) in introducing this measure had appealed for the sympathy and assistance of the House. He stated that the subject was difficult and complex, and said that he could not hope to succeed in the conduct of the Bill, unless the House gave him that sympathy and assistance. The right hon. Gentleman was undoubtedly entirely correct in speaking of the difficulty and complexity of this question. He (Mr. Stansfeld) did not mean, and the right hon. Gentleman did not mean, that the solution of the problem was not simple; but that, though the way might be clear, there were great difficulties in the way—difficulties which it was not easy to expound and render intelligible to assemblies like the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had made a special appeal to his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Government needed the assistance which he had reason to believe that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) would not be unwilling to give in the furtherance of Public Business as far as this measure was concerned; and the right hon. Gentleman had added that he hoped that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would find that his measure was based upon a broad and popular basis, such as would justify him in rendering the help in passing it which he had held out that he was ready to give. The right hon. Gentleman then went on to describe the new authorities which he proposed to create. Those authorities were to be purely elective, the *ex officio* element and the principle of election by two degrees having been entirely set aside. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he desired that the members of the County Councils should be elected upon the broad basis of popular suffrage, that of household and occupation suffrage of the Municipal Corporations of England defended by the principle of the Ballot. That statement of the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman as to the principles upon which he had founded this measure left nothing to be desired from a Liberal and Radical point of view, using those terms not in a Party, but in a political sense. The right hon. Gentleman had thus clearly expressed his conviction that popular bodies such as those he proposed to create in the shape of County Councils must be placed upon a popular basis, and he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that by the creation of such bodies, the commanding influence of the country gentlemen in these County Councils of the future would not in the least be endangered if they chose to enter them. That powerful statement of the right hon. Gentleman had been received with cheers from the Opposition side of the House that were spontaneous and were unpremeditated, and hon. Members around him were disposed to assume a good deal in favour of the measure from an administrative point of view. Hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, however, were no longer quite at liberty to continue to utter expressions of their favourable prejudices with regard to the Bill, inasmuch as one higher in authority than the right hon. Gentleman—Lord Salisbury—had told them at Carnarvon, a day or two ago, that this was not a Radical measure at all, that they were entirely mistaken in that supposition, and explained to them their own mental position and their own purposes with regard to it. Lord Salisbury said the Radical Party knew that they were unpopular with the great majority of the constituencies, and that therefore, if they wished to oppose a measure, they had only to say that they liked it in order to tinge it with and obtain for it a share of their own unpopularity. Lord Salisbury said that there was a good deal of ingenuity in this Radical policy with regard to this measure; but, in his opinion, all the ingenuity lay with Lord Salisbury. The Radical Party were not an ingenious, they were an ingenuous Party. He (Mr. Stansfeld) hoped that they had not been deceived by the right hon. Gentleman; but it was not easy to express approval after such a declaration. If Lord Salisbury had expressed the real view of the Government in this matter, then the Government must not be surprised if the Radical Party were not quite so ready to look at all the provisions of this measure in the future in the favourable light they had been disposed to in the past. As evidence of the good faith of the Radical Party, and in order to relieve the Government from the fear that, by giving their approval too largely to the Bill, they might injure it, he might say that a closer investigation of the Bill, from an administrative point of view, as regarded its provisions, had led the Radical Party to discover many grave defects in the measure, which it would be their duty to expound and to endeavour to amend. But, at the same time, he felt bound to say, speaking for himself and for his hon. Friends on that Bench sitting near him, that the points to which he had alluded as those to which they took more or less exception were not of a kind that would induce or justify them in proposing any Amendments upon the second reading of the Bill, and that they would confine their efforts to amending the provissions of the measure at its Committee stage. He would assume that they were all agreed upon the great object of establishing local government, and upon its main principle; because the subject was one that had been working up in the public mind to his personal knowledge for the last 20 years, and public opinion with regard to it had been consolidated and crystallized into a certain number of distinct ideas and propositions by which the Government could be guided, and he gladly recognized that the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in framing this measure, had endeavoured to embody the conclusions at which the public mind had arrived. As regarded that main principle, he would lay down three points. In the first place, what was required as the foundation of local government was simplicity, and by that he meant simplicity of areas, and thus to do away with the multiplicity and consequent confusion of areas and of Local Authorities. In the next place, it was desired to enlarge and elevate the functions of the Councils as regarded local government in those areas; and, lastly, to inform the whole system with life from the parish, which was the unit, to the county. Nothing less than those three objects would satisfy the *bonâ fide* Local Government Reformers, irrespective of Party. As he had already admitted, the difficulties in the way of simplicity of areas were great. To simplify the areas it was necessary to begin at the bottom, with the parish as the unit, and to build up from it. Any larger area must be constructed out of those units, which must not be divided, and they must proceed by that process until they reached the boundary of the county. That, however, the Government had not done. He need scarcely say that he was laying down a general principle which ought to be their guide, rather than asserting that there could be no exception to it. In order not only to simplify the area, but to enlarge and elevate the Local Authority as far as possible, they must seek to concentrate all Local Government functions for one area in one Governing Body, for the sake of simplicity and an elevation of the functions of the body. By that means the best men would be induced to enter those bodies. In order to put life in those bodies and into the system they must, in the first place, build upon the basis of popular franchise. That the right hon. Gentleman opposite had done, and he thanked him for so doing. And, in the second place, they should begin with the smallest area, which was generally the parish, and induce and enable the people to take part in its management and life. He did not think that the right hon. Gentleman could dissent from that proposition. He had carefully studied the provisions of the Bill as to simplification of areas, and he found them upon the whole to be large, comprehensive, satisfactory, and complete. In order to explain the process of the simplification of areas, he would deal with that part of the Bill which treated of them clause by clause. By the 51st clause the present Urban Sanitary Districts, the Urban Districts of the future, were to be held to be within the boundary of that county in which the greater part of them was, and by Clause 41 the Rural Districts were to be dealt with in the same manner by County Councils and the Local Government Boards. By Clause 56 the County Council was bound to take into consideration the report of the Boundary Commissioners. By Clause 59 any requisite changes in any areas, save the borough areas—but including the parish—could be made by the County Council or the Local Government Board; and by Clause 60 the Local Government Board might sever Unions for indoor and for outdoor purposes. He desired to point out that there was absolute completeness in the clauses relating to all these boundaries, that the whole ground was covered, and that full power was taken by the Government to carry out any amount of simplification of areas which might be thought advisable; and yet, in spite of having created a perfect machinery for the purpose, their Bill stopped short and failed to deal with the parish or with the Poor Law Union. The parish was the historical unit, but it was a very variable quantity. Many parishes were absurdly too small; some were too large. But the right hon. Gentleman had taken power to deal with this area, and all that was wanting was to add some simple provisions for the popular exercise of whatever functions might be suitable to the former, in order to perfect in this respect his scheme. But the greatest blot in the Bill, from the point of view of a Local Government Reformer, was the entire exclusion of the Poor Law system. And the consequence of that exclusion was that the measure was more complex than it otherwise might have been, instead of embodying the simplicity at which the right hon. Gentleman was aiming It was of no use for the Government in constructing new machinery for Local Government to half do the work. They might defer questions as to the imposition of certain responsibilities, and the conferring of certain powers, but they ought to start with as perfect a machinery as they could. In Rural Districts the rural members of the Board of Guardians were the sanitary authority, and the sanitary duties the Guardians discharged with ease after the Poor Law business was disposed of. In these districts there was to be a new Body, based upon popular election. Some of them would be so small that it would be difficult, unless they were enlarged, to find a sufficient number of candidates for the new Council, and yet it was to be created side by side with the Board of Guardians who formed the present substitute for the Council. The Guardians were not elected by household or occupation franchise, or by ballot, but by a system of plural votes and voting papers, and there were *ex officio* Guardians. Thus there would be side by side two authorities, the old ones formed upon lines discarded on the creation of the new. The simplification of areas was not half effected if the parish and the Poor Law system were left untouched. The right hon. Gentleman had given no reason for leaving out the Poor Law system, save that the attempt to deal with it might have imperilled his Bill. But that did not seem to be a sufficient reason. The first thing to do was to construct machinery, and having done that, you might to some extent defer the devolving of responsibilities and powers. There was no question of sentiment here as there was in the case of county boundaries; they were merely questions of convenience and finance, and these questions might very well be dealt with by the Department. He was convinced that if the right hon. Gentleman determined to include the

Poor Law system, there would be no insurmountable difficulty in doing it, and there were different ways in which it might be done. But let them look again at the incongruity of the situation in which the right hon. Gentleman placed matters. He left the Poor Law system untouched and Union assessment untouched; and then he created a County Council and gave it the power of levying rates for the county at large. He did nothing to ensure that the County and the Union assessment should be identical; and if a reform of the kind he advocated was not carried out there would be no unity of rating. Further, he said that the Justices in Quarter Sessions should still have the power of fixing the basis or standard of valuation. No one could deny that these were serious defects which must be made good sooner or later; and his argument was that there was no sufficient reason why it should not be done now. There were some minor points in the Bill which he thought in certain respects were objectionable, and on which the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman were not consistent with the principles he himself had laid down in reference to popular control. The right hon. Gentleman laid down the principle of popular election, of establishing a direct relation between the County Councils and those who elected them, and of trusting the County Councils. He believed that the country gentlemen instead of being swamped would hold their own, and more than their own, in the County Councils. The County Council would have to be held in the county town, and for a county councillor to do his duty, he must be able to attend the session there; and it was clear that there would be a very limited number of persons competing with the class out of which the magistrates had been hitherto chosen for the performance of those functions in the county town. But the right hon. Gentleman would not even trust them to elect their own chairman. They could not elect a man as chairman unless he was qualified to be a justice of the peace for the county. Why should they not be allowed to choose their own chairman, without having such a restriction as that laid upon them? It would be far better to say that the Lord Lieutenant should not select as magistrates men who were not members of the County Council. He was not recommending that; but it might, at any rate, be an inducement for men to join the Council who might not otherwise be disposed to do so. He had, however, a suspicion that the right hon. Gentleman did not care much about that restriction, and when they came to discuss it, perhaps the House would not care much about it either. Then the right hon. Gentleman declined to give the County Council the control over the police. The Quarter Sessions were to appoint the Chief Constable, and the Police Force was to be under the control of a Joint Committee of Quarter Sessions and the County Council. The right hon. Gentleman gave rather a curious reason for that extraordinary provision. He said that the inhabitants of boroughs had been for many years accustomed to municipal government, and had become educated to it to a degree that it would take the counties some years to attain. He (Mr. Stansfeld) did not know what the country gentlemen, the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman, said to the proposition; but, for himself, he was not prepared to endorse it at all. First of all, people must learn. The municipalities had learnt how to administer their police, and the county magistrates, who would largely compose those Councils, had been accustomed from time immemorial to control and regulate the police in the county in which they acted. Lastly, there was the question as to the selected members, as to which everybody knew that the clause in regard to Aldermen in Municipal Councils was introduced in the House of Lords on the Motion of Lord Lyndhurst, and there was a general consensus of opinion, he thought, on that (the Opposition) side of the House—he did not know how it might be on the other side—that that clause had not operated by any means beneficially. He would show how unreasonably it might operate in the County Council. Suppose that they had some Party spirit in a County Council consisting of 41 Members, and that they had a division on the question of the Selected Members, in which there were 21 on one side and 20 on the other. The 21 by a bare majority would be enabled to appoint all the selected members. Evidently, that would give an unfair opportunity and chance to those who happened to be in a majority, and would be a source of difference and irritation, as had sometimes been the case in the Municipal Corporations in the country. Why should the right hon. Gentleman, who was in favour of the principle of popular election, insist on an arrangement of that kind? Then by Clause 8 it was proposed to transfer, by Order of the Queen in Council to the County Council, the powers of certain Government Departments, such as the Local Government Board, the Board of Trade, and the Home Office.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Subject to submission to Parliament.

Mr. STANSFELD said, They knew by their experience in the case of Provisional Orders and the like that this condition was of small practical value, and that those things were generally passed *sub silentio* in that House. He did not want to express a positive opinion upon that point; but it was certainly rather a serious matter to authorize such an unlimited transfer of powers as the clause contemplated. Then, if he correctly read the Bill, the Local Government Board would have power to settle the number of representatives in the County Councils. That was a large power to be exercised simply by a Department of the Government. He did not doubt the impartiality or the ability with which they would perform that task; but, after all, the determination, within some limits, at any rate, of the number of Councillors to be elected to the County Councils was a function which Parliament ought to be able to exercise. Whether the number ought to be very large, or very limited, was a question of political importance, and some conclusions might be arrived at by the House and laid down in the Bill for the guidance of the Local Government Board. He did not propose now to enter into the contentious question as to the licensing system, which would, no doubt, in due course, be discussed by those who were well able to deal with it. As to the subject of finance, he confessed that he had heard with regret the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to a Question put to him by his right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre)—namely, that it was quite out of his power to put on the Table of the House any financial statement or explanation such as that question suggested. A very large sum was now going to be handed over from Imperial taxation to the local Governing Bodies, and yet the right hon. Gentleman said he could give the House no idea as to how that sum was going to be distributed. He (Mr. Stansfeld) thought the House ought, to some extent at least, to be in possession of the facts. Clause 22 was calculated to suggest that some of the Local Governing Bodies would suddenly find themselves in possession of an unexpected income, which would be larger than their expenses; and all those Bodies would have to consider how far they would have a share in this largesse. The House and the country, he thought, ought to have some general idea as to how this part of the Bill would operate. After detailing certain purposes to which the income of the Councils was to be devoted, the same clause also referred to a surplus, a remainder, a residue, and a balance. In fact, the clause seemed to be specially constructed so as to tantalize the District and County Councils throughout the country, and it would seem that they would not be satisfied until they got an insight into its probable working and effect. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would admit that it was due to the House that some fair estimate of the financial consequences of so large a measure should be given, and they were fairly entitled to some further explanation of the matter. The sole remaining question on which he wished to speak was that of the transference of powers. He found that by Section 8, and by the First Schedule, many of the powers of the Local Government Board were made over to the County Councils; but some of those powers were practically retained under Section 23, in connection with the distribution of grants. The right hon. Gentleman must be aware that, by virtue of those sections, the Local Government Board retained the power over grants, and might insist on certain conditions. Besides this, there was a long list of restrictions and exceptions, and there was nothing to show which powers were transferred and which were retained, so that the House had nothing before it to enable it to measure the amount of decentralization which would be accomplished by the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had based his Bill largely on the idea of decentralization, and the House should understand exactly how far it would effect that object. The Bill was drafted in a peculiar way, and it was owing to that, that a great deal of its difficulties originated. It was largely drafted by reference to former Acts and special clauses, and it was, therefore, exceedingly difficult to understand. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board could not hope to pass his measure, and he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman did not wish to do so without making it intelligible to Members of that House. That, however, could not be done without some further information in the shape of official statements being laid on the Table of the House to be studied at leisure. The Local Government Board was an exceedingly able and hard-working Department. He (Mr. Stansfeld) knew it well, and he undertook to say that there was no more hard-working Government Department in this country, and that its staff was by no means over-paid. Perhaps, it had one besetting sin, and he did not know that it stood alone in that respect. It was, like all other Departments, too fond of paper; but it did not shirk its work. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would do what he could to remedy that defect. If the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in taking from the Board any considerable exercise of its power and responsibility, that reduction would be shown in a subsequent reduction of its staff. He was quite sure, however, that no portion of its staff could be reduced without a reduction of the work which it had to perform. Therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman could tell the House what reduction of the staff he contemplated as the consequence of his measure, that would be the best possible evidence of his having succeeded in the policy of decentralization. He (Mr. Stansfeld) was interested in the passing of the Bill with certain Amendments. It was not a Bill which could be forced or hurried on. It was not a Bill to the discussion of which they could with advantage apply the Closure. The Government could not hope to pass such a measure without addressing themselves successfully to the understanding of the House, without persuading and convincing the House. In order to do that, ample time must be allowed for discussion in the House, and they could not pass the Bill without convincing the country. Ample time must be allowed for the country to master the subject, which it was only just beginning to understand. He would suggest that, in this case, as in some others, the most haste might be the worst speed. The best policy, as well as the right course, was for the Government to treat the House as it deserved, by taking it into its confidence on this question, not to restrict the time of discussion, but to trust to the general feeling of the House to press some such measure as this to a successful completion.

MR. FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) said, that as one of the latest elected Members of the House, he desired to be allowed to say how heartily he approved of the principle of this Bill. He was extremely glad that the great question of Local Government, which had been before the country for so many years, and promised by successive Governments, was at last going to be treated in a fair manner, and in a manner in which he believed would be permanent. The House would agree that if this Bill had been of a tinkering nature, it would not have received the approval of the House or the country; but, on the contrary, would have been received with disdain and contempt. He believed that the Bill was approved of by all parties in the country. He had consulted with many of those whom he had the honour to represent, and he was in a position to say that they were of opinion that the principle of the Bill was sound; that, of course, there were certain details in it which wanted alteration, and that there were certain matters requiring attention which were not altogether dealt with in the Bill. The most satisfactory point in the Bill was that there was to be no great alteration in the boundaries of our counties. They would all remember the excitement there was during the Autumn and Winter when the Boundary Commission went out to inquire into the boundaries of the counties. The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), in his speech in introducing the Bill, said that this was a question of sentiment, and so he (Mr. Fellowes) believed it was, and he was very grateful to the Government for not having made any great alteration in the boundaries. He felt certain that if there had been any great alteration in the boundaries, there would have been much discontent and great heart-burning, which might possibly have largely impeded the progress of the measure in the House. They were told that in the future County Councils were to arrange their own boundaries. He had not the slightest fear on that point, because the men who would be elected on the County Councils would take good care of their own interests, and also of the ancient landmarks of the counties. Now, as to the formation of the Councils, there were some people in the country—and he believed there were certain Members of the House of Commons—who feared that those who had in the past done good work in Quarter Sessions, and who had done their work in a fair and economical way, would be swamped. He, personally, did not believe a word of it. He firmly believed that if those gentlemen who had in the past done such good work in the different counties would only consent to allow themselves to be put up for the County Councils, in nine times out of ten they would be elected to those Councils. Judging from the remarks which had been made lately in Quarter Sessions, county magistrates were determined to come forward for the County Councils, and he strongly hoped they would stick to that resolve. The only thing he feared in the County Councils was that it might come to pass, as it happened in the present time in our Municipal Councils, that there would be one side Conservative and the other side Liberal. He trusted earnestly that this would not come to pass, because if it did it could only be detrimental to the proper transaction of county business, in regard to which all Party feeling ought to be put aside. They were told that the elections for the County Councils were to take place every three years. He noticed that those who ought to know something about this matter thought that a man ought to be elected for a longer period—for five years. Personally, he was greatly in favour of a longer period, because he thought that at the present time we had plenty of elections going on. Besides, he thought that if the elections were, say, every five years, it would conduce more to the stability of the Councils, and would be much more economical. Now, as to finance, they were told that large sums were to be handed over to the County Councils for them to use, and also that the Councils were to be given large powers for borrowing, for emigration, and for other matters. He thought that some check ought to be placed on the County Council, so that no Council could run the ratepayers into any extraordinary extravagance. Moreover, he did not like at all the proposal to hand over the County Police to a Joint Committee of the County Councils and Quarter Sessions for many reasons. One reason especially was that the handing over of the police to this Joint Committee would lead to great friction between the County Councils and the Quarter Sessions, and that was a matter which ought to be avoided as much as possible. There were some people who wished that the police could be handed over wholly to the County Councils. He did not agree with that suggestion, because the County Councils under the Bill were to have no judicial administration at all. As the Bill gave the Quarter Sessions power over the Chief Constable, both of dismissal and of appointment, and also kept the magistrates in their judicial positions, he would much rather see the police put under the Quarter Sessions also. He knew there were some people who thought that the police ought to be wholly under the Home Office in London. The Home Office had plenty of work to do at the present time, and, therefore, he did not think that such a suggestion would meet with much favour. The chief reason why he rose was to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) in respect to occupation roads, of which the right hon. Gentleman made no mention in his speech. In many parts of the country there were roads called occupation roads. In his own constituency there were many roads, fen roads, which were bad at almost every period of the year. Indeed, he could not help thinking that the Members of the House of Commons who invaded his constituency last August must have felt that the roads were in a very bad condition. Certainly there ought to be something done with regard to these occupation roads, and he begged the right hon. Gentleman to take into his serious consideration the great importance of making some provision for the systematic repair of these roads, which were of the greatest public benefit. He thanked the House for having listened to his remarks with so much patience.

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, he must congratulate the Government upon the boldness and foresight they had shown in dealing with the difficult and complicated subject of Local Government Reform in a broad and liberal spirit. He assured them they had already increased their credit in the country, and added to the respect with which many hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House regarded their legislative efforts. Of course there were great omissions from the Bill, many of which had been criticized—and he thought very fairly criticized—in the very able and moderate speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). But all hon. Members who had studied the difficult and complicated subject of Local Government must feel that there must necessarily be great omissions from any one Bill which was brought in to deal with the subject. Having given his best attention, however, to the main lines on which this Bill was drawn, he was fully convinced that within those lines there was plenty of room for supplying all the omissions, and also for correcting all defects. Indeed, he felt confident, if the main lines of the Bill were adopted by the House, as he felt sure they would be, that within a few years, whatever Government might be in power, we should have a comprehensive and well-organized system of County Government built up on a broad and popular basis. Having said this much, he would not be misunderstood if he went on to make some rather adverse criticisms upon some of the leading provisions of the measure. In the first place, he confessed he was sorry that the Government had not seen their way to adopt the County Parliamentary Franchise rather than the Municipal Borough Franchise. He could fully appreciate the strong reasons the Government had for adopting the Municipal Borough Franchise. There, no doubt, was a specious uniformity, a uniformity more apparent, he thought, than real, in putting country districts under the same franchise and the same constitution as the municipal boroughs were already. He quite admitted there was a certain attractive simplicity about the Municipal Borough Franchise, but he thought the Government would have been wiser to have withstood the temptation, and to have adopted the franchise which already regulated the election of Members of Parliament throughout the country districts. In the first place, there would then have been a single system of election both for Parliamentary and for local purposes, and that simplicity would have commended itself to the minds, not only of Local Government Reformers, but of every elector in the country. In the second place—and this was the point he wished more especially to urge on the Government—by the adoption of the County Parliamentary Franchise, they would have avoided defects which certainly existed in the Bill; they would have avoided inflicting serious injustice on several classes directly concerned in Local Government and Local Taxation. He did not know whether it was within the knowledge of every Member of the House, but it certainly was not within the knowledge of everybody interested in the Bill throughout the country, that under the Bill no owner of land would have a vote for the County or District Council unless he occupied a building within the county or district, and resided within a certain distance of the county or district. There were a large number of gentlemen very deeply interested in Local Government, and in the incidence of local taxation, who owned large properties in districts within which they did not occupy land or reside. He supposed it was not disputed in the House that these gentlemen paid a large proportion of the local rates. If any argument were needed to convince the House and the country that owners were ratepayers to a very large extent, he would only refer hon.

Members to that admirable Report written by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in the year 1870, which dealt with all the complicated questions that surrounded the reform of local rating. If, as that Report showed, an owner might be a large ratepayer, it was not evident, to his (Mr. Hobhouse's) mind, why an owner should be disfranchised for the purposes of this Bill. He reminded the Government that the case of towns was very different from that of country districts in this respect. There were comparatively few owners of property who did not reside within, or within a short distance of, the municipal boroughs in which they were interested, and if they were non-resident their buildings and property were usually let for such terms of years, and under such conditions, that they had scarcely any interest themselves in the rise or fall of the local rates. It was very different in country districts, where farms were usually held for very short terms, and where in these days of falling rents any increase of rates must necessarily fall on the owners of those farms. He had no doubt he would be met in this matter by the old cry of 'One man One vote'; but he must point out that this cry had nothing to do with the disfranchisement of the owners of property. The question he was arguing was not a question of dual voting or faggot voting, but a question of the total disfranchisement and disqualification of a certain class for purposes in which they were most directly interested. There was no doubt that many men who were owners of property might be doubly represented in the House by voting in more than one constituency, but that had nothing to do with the present question, because what he complained of was that if a man owned property in two counties, and only occupied premises in one, he might be totally without representation in the Council of the county in which he did not reside, and totally without representation in districts of a county in which he owned property, and not only unrepresented, but disqualified by law from sitting on the County Council or on the District Council. This was not only unjust and unjustifiable, but it was also objectionable from other points of view. There was an argument which he thought would commend itself to hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, bearing, as it did, directly on the present question. If they, by this Bill, denied the interest of an owner in the incidence of rating, which they did; if they disfranchised him as a county voter, if they disqualified him from sitting on the County Council, they would raise a great obstacle to any proposal which might be made in the future for placing certain portions of the rates directly on that class of men. He supposed there was no principle of reform which was more generally accepted in this House than the principle—the equitable principle—of dividing rates between owner and occupier. That was a principle which he was anxious to see adopted, but he confessed the present Government were raising an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of that reform by denying hereafter the right of the owner to be represented on those Bodies which dealt with the local rates. How could they deny this right and then proceed to throw upon that very class whom they disfranchised the direct payment of a considerable portion of the local rates? The Committee of 1870, to which he had already referred, reported that the present system of local taxation under which the exclusive charge of almost all local rates was placed by law on the occupier was contrary to sound policy. He (Mr. Hobhouse) urged upon the Government that if they looked forward at no very distant period to a reform of the law of rating, they should think seriously before they disfranchised one of the classes who would have to bear the burden of the rates. There were other anomalies which arose from applying the borough franchise, which was distinctly a town franchise, to country districts. For instance, an occupier of land without buildings would have no vote under the present Bill. The occupiers of land of £10 and upwards were a class especially enfranchised for Parliamentary purposes within boroughs in 1884, and now it was proposed to give them no power whatever for local purposes in country districts. He had heard within the last few days of large graziers who occupied large tracts of land, but who did not occupy any building within the district, and who, though they contributed greatly to the local rates, would have no voice whatever under this Bill. There was another question which would be raised on the borough franchise, and that was whether the occupier, who could only claim under the service franchise of the Parliamentary Register, would have any power to vote under the Bill, and that was a question which he hoped would be cleared up by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). The right hon. Gentleman said, in his very able speech in introducing the Bill, that it would give a qualification to all ratepapers. But whom did the right hon. Gentleman consider a ratepayer? Did he consider a labourer who lived in a cottage of the rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week, and to whom it did not make the slightest difference whether the rates were high or low, a ratepayer? Again, did he consider the landowner who, as he (Mr. Hobhouse) had shown, paid heavy rates, but who did not occupy in the district, a ratepayer? Was it right to admit the first man and exclude the second? He was strongly in favour of admitting the whole class of labourers, as he believed there were other than pecuniary considerations involved in their admission, but he was also strongly against excluding any class who had a real interest, especially those who had a large interest in matters of local taxation and local government, from the benefits which it was proposed to confer by this Bill. He had no doubt that a proposal providing for the separate representation of owners on the Councils would commend itself to many hon. Members present, but he did not go so far as that. He only urged that owners should not be entirely disfranchised under the Bill. He quite admitted that there might not be very many men who would suffer, but there would be cases of glaring hardship, and he thought the interests of local government might seriously suffer in country districts from excluding these men, not only from the right to vote, but from the right to sit on the Councils. It was easy to remedy this defect without upsetting the framework of the measure. The Government need not in any way give up the principle they had adopted of the Municipal Borough Franchise, but they could put a provision in the Registration Bill that in making up every roll of county electors there should be added to the list of occupation voters the Parliamentary list of owners. There would be no hardship and no inconvenience in that, and he trusted the Government would take his suggestion into consideration before the Bill reached the Committee stage. He now desired to make a few remarks on the cognate subject of registration. In the first place, he would impress on the Government the great importance of making some new provision for effecting registration in country districts. At present in many parishes where there were only unpaid overseers—men without any special training, and changed regularly every year — they were already charged with the exceedingly burdensome and troublesome duty of making up the List of Parliamentary Voters. This Bill would throw upon them a still greater burden—namely, the duty of making up at the same time a List of Municipal Voters, and he was sure any hon. Member of the House who had studied, as he had had occasion to study, those remarkable documents called "precepts," which were issued every year by the Clerk of the Peace to the county overseers, would easily understand how unfair it was to call upon men, without proper training, to master the duties of overseers under those precepts, and to perform the work of preparing the Register of Voters, and to do this without any remuneration, perhaps, at the time of the year when they were busiest with their private work. The present defective system for which some remedy ought certainly to be found led to most unsatisfactory results. It was within his knowledge that three years ago, when the new Register of Parliamentary Voters had to be made up, there were whole parishes and large portions of parishes actually disfranchised by the very natural neglect of the parish overseers. Such a state of things ought not to occur. If it did occur under this Bill it would be a public scandal, and he hoped the Government, if they could not at once provide some proper machinery for keeping a Register of both Parliamentary and Municipal Voters in country districts, would make some temporary provision for this purpose. He intended to submit a clause in Committee providing for some temporary provision being made for the registration being performed at a slight expense in the country districts by officers who were qualified for the duty. Now, if the House would allow him, he would address a few words to them upon the subject of areas. This Bill, as had already been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), did very little to simplify areas directly, but he must say it did a great deal indirectly to simplify areas. He was sure the extensive powers obtained in Clause 59 of the Bill would in the future do very much to reduce our local government areas to a much simpler form. He believed the Government were, on the whole, well advised to omit from the present Bill the question of making the Unions conterminous with the counties. He saw nothing in the Bill to prevent them in some very short time bringing the Union as well as the sanitary district under the control of the new district authorities. He was confident if this Bill was adopted in its present shape we should not have long to wait before some proposal of the kind was made, and he believed that in the 60th clause of the Bill, which provided for contributory Unions, would be found the real key for the settlement of union and county boundaries. He believed that in adopting that plan the Government had certainly adopted the line of least resistance, andthat it would in the end bring satisfaction both to the inhabitants of Unions and of counties. But he earnestly urged on the Government to think twice and thrice before they created any new areas under this Bill. They already suffered from a surplusage of areas. There were three new classes of areas proposed to be created—two for the purpose of elections alone—the electoral divisions of counties and the wards of districts, and, on the whole, he thought the provision made for preventing these new areas as far as possible from overlapping the areas of administration were satisfactory. But there was a third new area which was the area for the purposes of administration—namely, the licensing division. He did not intend to say anything to-night on the general question of licensing, but he asked the Government if it was necessary for their purposes to create a new area at all, and if the new licensing division would give satisfaction to the class for whose benefit the Government wished to create it? Surely it would be better to choose boldly one of the existing areas for the purpose of licensing. They could choose, of course, the whole county; but he saw great objections to that if they were really going in for what was called the principle of Local Option. But they had another alternative; they had the existing sanitary districts, the districts that they themselves proposed to make the administrative unit under the county, and he seriously asked them whether they would not give more satisfaction, from a popular point of view, if they adopted this district as the new district for licensing? It was quite possible to adopt the District Council as the Licensing Authority, and yet, if they thought it necessary, have an appeal to the County Council. He did not think that would be more complicated than giving the Licensing Committee in the first instance the right of hearing applications, and then giving the right of appeal to the County Councils. Let him point out the advantages of this course. In the first place, the Rural Sanitary Division more nearly coincided than any other existing area with the Petty Sessional Division, which was the present licensing unit; and although, no doubt, there were a great many small urban sanitary districts which it would be difficult to deal with, yet there would be no more hardship in grouping them into a reasonable district than there was at present in grouping a large number of electoral divisions into an entirely new district. There would also be in the plan he suggested this advantage—that they would avoid what seemed to many Members most interested in the reform of county local government the great danger of the elections for the County Council turning too much on the one question of licensing. If the District Council were the first licensing body, that would remove the danger from the County Council, and it would give the District Council some more and very important duties to perform. He was bound to say that, under the Bill, at all events, the District Council did not seem likely to die of overwork. He had now to speak of the election and constitution of these Councils; and here, again, he wished to make an appeal to the Government in favour of more simplicity. The Government proposed in their Bill two different systems for the election of County Councils and District Councils. County Councils were to be elected every three years in single-membered districts, and the District Councils were to be elected, a third every year, in plural-membered constituencies. Surely one system could be chosen for both Councils. There were advantages and disadvantages in both these plans; but surely the Government ought to make up their minds which of the plans was best, and to adopt it for the two sets of elections. There was nothing that would confuse the mind of the ordinary elector more than having to elect two Bodies in different ways, and to some extent at different times, and in different proportions; and he suggested to the Government, especially in view of the fact that the experience of municipal boroughs had shown that annual elections were somewhat too frequent, that the better plan would be to elect half the Council in both cases for two years. With regard to the selected members, he must say, speaking on behalf of an agricultural district, he considered they would be very valuable elements in both Councils; but there was no doubt that care ought to be taken that the addition of the selected members should not be a means of turning the majority elected by the popular vote into a minority. There were two dangers which had to be guarded against, and both, he believed, had been felt in the Town Councils of municipal boroughs. In the first place, as had already been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, there was a great danger that at the first election a very small majority might elect the whole of the selected members, and that the results of that election might be felt for years, and even for generations. He suggested to the Government a simple plan—he had no doubt it would be suggested by other Members on the Opposition side of the House—for meeting this difficulty, and that was that every elected member of a new Council should only have the power of voting for one selected member. Then there was another danger, and that, he believed, had grown into an abuse—namely, that outgoing selected members, as Aldermen were in boroughs, had the power of taking part in the election of their successors. It was not at all clear that the selected members ought to vote at all.

MR. RITCHIE: The outgoing selected members do not vote.

MR. HOBHOUSE said, he ought to have stated that the continuing selected members voted for the next batch of selected members. That was a danger which ought to be guarded against, for he was sure Selected Members would not give satisfaction if they did anything that would turn a popular majority into a minority. If they did not do that, they would certainly be found a very valuable element in the constitution of both County and District Councils. There was one very important subject with regard to the constitution of these Councils which he desired to press on the serious attention of the Government. They would have, when this Bill was passed, a series of popularly elected bodies. First of all, there would be the Imperial Parliament, then the County Councils, and, lastly, the District Councils; and between such bodies there ought certainly to be connecting links. No such links were provided, and he asked the Government whether they did not think it would serve the public interest and form a more complete system of government throughout the country if there were permanent links between these bodies? For instance, hon. Members could have no doubt, when they came to consider the matter, that the County Councillors ought to have the right of sitting on the District Council of their own district. They would be comparatively few in number; they would be elected by the same franchise as the District Councillors; and they would form a very useful link between the District Council and the County Council. Of course, there was another plan—which, to his mind, did not seem so satisfactory—and that was that the Chairman of every District Council should be *ex-officio* a member of the County Council. He thought there were much more serious objections to that plan; but, in his opinion, the Government would be well advised to take one course or the other. Then there was the further suggestion, which he saw had already been made by a high authority, and that was that the Members of Parliament for the county and boroughs in the county should have a seat on their own County Council. That he should not urge in the interests of Members of Parliament themselves, for he was sure they had plenty of other duties, but he should urge it most strongly in the public interest, because he believed it would give them a most valuable opportunity of forming a natural link between this popularly elected Assembly and the popularly elected local assemblies in their constituencies. He would not weary the House by entering into the financial arrangements of the Bill; but there was one thing he wished to say. It seemed to him, as it must to other Members who represented agricultural constituencies, that the new provisions for maintaining main roads would be a vast improvement. For the last 10 years the management of main roads had been financially in a state of chaos in the country districts, and it was a great improvement for the ratepayers to be relieved from what had been the most unjust burden of having to maintain all the main roads for the benefit of the other classes who did not contribute in proportion to their capacity to the maintenance of those roads. The new Wheel Tax he regarded as a simple act of justice to the country districts, which should have been imposed 10 years ago, when the turnpike system was abolished. He implored the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) not to abandon the tax simply because the large towns were crying out against it. The case of the country districts was quite different from the case of towns. The towns might have a great deal to say for themselves in this matter. They parted with their turnpikes long ago, and they had not large districts of land which contributed to the maintenance of the roads, whether there were buildings on them or not. He urged the Government, if they were obliged in the last resort, as he did not believe they would be, to abandon the Wheel Tax for the large towns, to devise some other means for enabling the country districts to get proper contributions for the maintenance of main roads from all the classes who used those roads. With regard to the omissions from the Bill, they were, no doubt, very large; but he confidently looked forward to the Government dealing with some of them, if not in this Bill, in some measure which would be introduced this Session or the next. There was no doubt that if we were to have a satisfactory system of Local Government at all, we must have unity of rating and unity of assessment. The present system of assessment was perfectly indefensible, and great advantage and efficiency would accrue by an alteration in the mode of levying rates. Then there were certain powers which he would confess he should have thought the Government would not have hesitated to transfer to the District Council, and those were powers under the School Attendance Act, which were only conferred on Guardians because there was no other authority in the country districts upon which they could be conferred. He trusted that before the Bill left Committee the powers under that Act would be added to the powers of the District Councils. With regard to the government of small towns, there was a very valuable clause in the Bill—Clause 47. He hoped the Government would consider the advisability of extending that clause, which provided for the appointment of local committees in certain parishes — mostly town parishes—for what he might call purely town purposes. He thought that great satisfaction might be afforded to many small towns, that did not wish, at present, to have all the powers of urban sanitary districts, by providing some simple machinery such as a local committee by which they could manage the town's affairs, instead of leaving them to the management of the rural Guardians, who had not much interest in them. He was sorry to have detained the House at such length. He sincerely trusted, and he felt confident, after the very re-assuring speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), that this great national question would be treated by all sections of the House, not as a Party question, but as a question which all Parties had a great interest in seeing settled. He trusted that the Bill when passed, with such Amendments as might prove to be necessary, would reflect as much credit on the Government, its authors, and on Parliament, as the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 reflected on the Government and Parliament of that day.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, he had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax with great satisfaction. He had had a great many dealings with the right hon. Gentleman in regard to matters closely connected with some of the subjects under discussion in this Bill, and he would venture to say, with all sincerity, that the speech which the right hon. Gentleman had made to-night only embodied that which had universally characterized his conduct and action—that was to say, courtesy and consideration for all with whom he had dealings. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would state—and state most honestly and frankly—that when the right hon. Gentleman was at the Local Government Board they had always received from him, as, indeed, they had received from most Presidents of the Local Government Board, that courtesy and consideration which they welcomed from Gentlemen in whatever part of the House they might sit. The right hon. Gentleman had added a most valuable contribution to the discussion of the important Bill before the House. There were many portions of the right hon. Gentleman's speech with which he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) quite agreed. Many of the right hon. Gentleman's statements would have a most beneficial effect on the mind of the President of the Local Government Board, for they would show him many considerations which ought to guide him to a great extent on many of the details of the measure. For instance, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) thought the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) would not deny that it would be most useful to the House that they should get some general statement—he knew no statement could be absolutely correct—as to the finances, how they were to be applied, and who were to receive them. It was desirable that they should know what would be the difference between the towns and the country, and what they might expect and hope for in the rural districts. There was another point in the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) which was a highly important and most valuable one. They did not know now the enormous powers which might be transferred from the Government Departments—the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade—to the County Council. He thought they ought to have that carefully stated. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that all the powers which had been conferred on the Board of Trade and on the Local Government Board by Act of Parliament, if they were transferred from either or from both those Departments, ought to be transferred by Act of Parliament, in order that the matter might come before the House. It would not be satisfactory, in his humble judgment, that these transfers should be carried out by Provisional Orders, which would lie on the Table of the House, and that then within 40 days, or whatever the time might be, would be transferred to the County Council, without Parliament knowing anything about what those powers might contain. He thought these were important questions, which deserved their most serious consideration. He had listened most attentively to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to commencing with parishes, and he had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would recollect the controversy they had had over this very question of parishes. He had stated—and the right hon. Gentleman could not get out of it, because it was absolutely true and correct—that if they had to deal with parishes, they would have to add several small parishes together to make a proper area, and they would also have to divide large parishes for the same purpose. They thought that so objectionable that, if he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) recollected aright, one of the main reasons why the Bill brought in by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer failed was because of the proposal to put numbers of small parishes together. He thought the right hon. Gentleman wanted to see parishes of less than 200 inhabitants amalgamated with other parishes, which would have brought about a greater revolution than the Bill before the House. At any rate, objection was taken to the Bill on that ground, and that was the reason why it was not adopted. There might be other reasons why the scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not accepted; but he would not go into that Bill, nor would he go into the reasons why the scheme of Lord Basing, then Mr. Sclater-Booth, was not adopted. He would simply say that, under the first measure, half the Central Council were to come from the heads of the different parishes, and the other half from the magistrates *ex-officio;* and under the second, or Mr. Sclater-Booth's scheme, one-third were to come from the magistrates, one-third from the Boards of Guardians, and one-third were to be elected by popular suffrage. That, he thought, was the last proposal made. Now the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board went upon a totally different principle. If he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) were asked about that great question, he should say it was a revolution—the greatest revolution with regard to County Government which they had had during the century. No doubt—and he was not going to deny it—both sides of the House, and especially both Front Benches, had pledged themselves that some alteration of this kind should take place. When he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had spoken on the question in the country, he had warned his friends that it might seem in theory an excellent thing to do; but the question was, how would it work in practice? Did they think, when it came to practice, that they would get a better or a more economical system than they had at present? That was what he had always stated, and what he stated at the present moment. But things had now gone too far; he admitted it fully. They had now to deal with a different state of affairs altogether. Lord Salisbury, in the year 1885, when he laid down the programme which was to guide the Conservative Party, stated distinctly that one portion of the programme was a County Government Bill, and, if he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) recollected aright, the Councils were to be elected on popular suffrage. And if he remembered aright, also, the authorized programme coming from the opposite side of the House—from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—was very much in the same direction; therefore, there were both Parties stating distinctly that if a County Government Bill was brought in, that County Government Bill must be based upon popular suffrage and popular representation. Well, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board—and time would show whether in so doing he was right or wrong—had followed out the principle which had been laid down, and the result was the Bill now before the House. Whether the measure would answer all the expectations of those who introduced it, whether it would answer all the expectations of the country, time alone could prove; but this much he could say for his right hon. Friend at the head of the Local Government Board—that the Bill was an honest endeavour to meet the views and opinions of those who had stated those views and opinions previously, and to meet the general view and general opinion which many hon. Members in different parts of the country had promised their constituents that they were prepared to support. Well, he should now like to say a word upon a point which he thought deserved some small consideration—and it would be very small—from him. His right hon. Friend had stated that those who had had to administer county affairs up to the present time had done it satisfactorily and economically. He could bring two witnesses before the House that he thought hon. Members—especially hon. Members on the opposite side—would not dispute or deny. He recollected perfectly well, years ago, when his hon. and most lamented Friend Mr. Cobden came to reside down in the Western Division of the County of Sussex, that gentleman, after he had been there some time, saying — "The one thing that strikes me of all others is the way in which the County Magistrates do their duty. The care and attention which they pay to their work, especially to matters of finance, entitles them to all credit." He would call another witness —namely, a newspaper which on the opposite side of the House they all respected—he meant *The Daily News.* *The Daily News*, years ago, wrote in this way. It said—

> "Look at London; see how London is governed. Hundreds of men can be added to the police force"—

he was not sure that the statement was not—

> "thousands of men can be added to the police force, and no one in London is consulted and is able to make a remark; but what happens in West Sussex? The hon. and gallant Member

for that Division, when it was proposed to add one single man to the county police of Sussex, was able to get up and dispute the appointment, and declare that no addition to the police was necessary. Here we are not able to say what should be done; but the Quarter Sessions are able to criticize these things, and say whether or not one single policeman is required."

He mentioned these things to show that although the County Magistrates might not have done all they ought to have done, yet their great and their earnest desire had been to do that which they believed to be not only in the interest of the country generally, but in the interest of the ratepayers especially. He ventured to express a hope that they had failed very little, or had not failed at all, in that which they had undertaken, and had tried and were still trying to perform. He should like to say a word upon another question which had been raised by many people as to what was to happen to the County Magistrates in the future. He had read, and read most attentively, the speech of Lord Spencer down in Northamptonshire the other day, and he ventured to say that no better advice could be given to them as a body than had been given by that noble Lord. He had said as much to the Quarter Sessions with which he was connected. He had said that if they thought their services were of any use to the county they should offer those services freely and honestly, and he ventured to believe that in the future as in the past, if they only endeavoured to do their duty, they might be found useful and necessary in the carrying out of those multifarious and difficult duties which they had had for so many years to perform. He would now, for just one moment, address himself to one or two points in the Bill, and the first point he would raise—and it was one which his right hon. Friend should consider—was whether the right hon. Gentleman did not think there was some danger of overweighting the Central Councils by imposing upon them all the duties which the Bill proposed to cast upon them? The duties were multifarious and difficult, and it might so happen that a large number of men might be elected on the Councils who had never been accustomed to deal with these questions; and seeing that the questions would all have to be carefully dealt with, it was a matter for consideration whether they were not going too fast in giving such people all the powers contained in the Bill. It was a question whether all these responsibilities should be placed on the members of the Councils at once, and whether they should not wait until they were sure these persons could walk before they expected them to run. As he understood it, the first members of the Central County Councils were to be elected for three years. Why should that not be a tentative time? Why should they not consider the subject in the light of growing experience during that time, and by degrees impose upon the Councils those various duties which they would have to perform? Then he had heard it said—he did not know what the opinion of the House would be on the matter, and he only threw it out for what it was worth—that if, after the first three years, things should be found to go well, and it should be found that they had good Councils, they should increase the interval and have elections only once in five years instead of once in three years. Hon. Members must remember how costly these elections would be. They must remember the people they would deter from coming forward if a heavy cost were imposed upon them. They must remember, also, that when a man had once got into his work and knew the duties he had to perform, how much more useful and how much better he was than an inexperienced man; and when the people got accustomed to a man and found that he was doing his work well, they would be very loth to displace him. Therefore, in his humble judgment, it would be better that the Councils should last for five rather than for three years. He would now go to the next point which he thought a very important one, although he had no doubt a great many hon. Members would not agree with what he was going to say. The question was that of police. In the county with which he was connected he had been Chairman of the Police Committee for many years, and from his experience in that capacity he could say that it took a long time to understand all the various bearings of the police question. He would admit he was sorry to see, in a speech the Marquess of Salisbury made at Carnarvon the other night, he rather depreciated the services of the magistrates, and said he should think it would be well to take away from them the management of of police. The noble Lord pointed out that the gaols had been taken away from them. That they all knew perfectly well. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was one of those who differed from the Conservative Government which took away the management of the gaols from the magistrates, and he voted against the Government on that occasion, because he thought that the local magistrates and the localities themselves could control these gaols quite as well, if not better, than a central authority could do. But what had the magistrates done? Because they had had the gaols taken away from them they had not neglected the great duty that still remained to them of visiting the gaols and the people who might happen to be confined in them. It was precisely the same with the lunatic asylums—with regard to which question he should like to say a few words in a moment. With regard to the police, he would ask his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board whether he thought a divided authority was a good thing? If the magistrates were to have all the judicial authority, if they were to be responsible more or less for law and order, and if they were to see that the police were in an effective condition, he maintained that they ought to have the sole control of the force. Many hon. Members might shake their heads and say "No;" but that was his deliberate opinion—that it would be better in every sense for the interests of the country that the magistrates should still retain the police as they dealt with them at present. And his view was the same with regard to the lunatic asylums. That was a very difficult class of business to deal with. They had built asylums and had done all they could to place the persons confined within them in a good position, and it was now proposed to throw the buildings and their inmates over to another authority though ignorant as to the manner in which that authority would deal with them. The magistrates had Commissioners of Lunacy over them, no doubt; but had they neglected their duty because of that? On the contrary, they had been most anxious to agree with all the recommendations which the Commissioners might have made; and this, again, was one of those questions which might very well be left in the hands of those who had dealt with it so successfully up to the present moment. He now came to another subject which was one of great importance. He should like to ask his right hon. Friend—and this, no doubt, was a matter which would cause a great difference of opinion—how he proposed to deal with the counties, certain portions of which had a very sparse rural population, and in which there were a large number of towns of considerable size. He should like to know how the right hon. Gentleman intended to deal with these? Were the towns absolutely to override the rural population? He would not say how it was to be done, but if they took the test of population alone the rural districts would be absolutely so out-voted that they would have no part in that management which was established, it was said, entirely for their benefit. On the second reading of a Bill like this they could not go too closely into all these questions. This was a very important matter which deserved the very serious attention and consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. There was another question which came immediately after that, and one that, perhaps, might be of more importance than that, especially to the poorer inhabitants of the districts — he meant the question of expenditure. He did not see in the Bill those safeguards which were necessary to prevent extravagant expenditure. Whatever anyone said, they knew perfectly well that complaints were made day by day of the enormous increase which took place in the rates in towns managed by those very authorities which were now held up to the admiration of the House. In some towns local affairs were admirably managed; but in other towns, as hon. Members knew, they were recklessly managed, and what was wanted was to stop this extravagance, and to put a check upon the borrowing powers which the Local Authorities now possessed. Those were points which, he maintained, deserved the most grave and serious consideration of the House. When they came to hand over deliberately such enormous powers to any body of men, all depended on the men who had to administer them. When they had in the management of local affairs men of a certain position who did not wish to make their names known, and did not desire to say—"Oh, I helped to erect that magnificent building!" they would do very well; but when they had men whose great object was self-glorification—and he hoped the powers contained in the Bill would never descend to that class of men—the state of things would be reversed. Unless there was some means of checking extravagant outlay, directly they had the class of men such as he described in power a condition of things would be brought about which would give a death-blow to the Bill. He would go for one moment to another very interesting subject—namely, the question of licensing. There had been various meetings on that subject. A Committee of County Chairmen had met and had passed a resolution, he believed, unanimously—he did not know that it was unanimously; but the newspapers had stated that it was—that these clauses should be expunged from the Bill. All the communications which he had had on this question, by letter or otherwise, had been from gentlemen connected with the Temperance Party. They were all for taking these clauses out of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He heard one "Hear, hear!" but that was not the view of the majority of hon. Members sitting in the House; but, be that as it might, the House must not forget that they had had Bills and Motions on the licensing question brought before them for years and years past. They had carried a Local Option scheme in that House, though he had always voted against such proposals. They had carried a Local Option Resolution; but that was a very different thing from carrying a Bill. They had carried Bills for dealing with Sunday Closing in various counties. The Motions as to Local Option had been confined to the House of Commons; but the Bills for closing public-houses on Sundays had been, most of them, thrown out in the other House. Why was this? Because it had been stated that before dealing with this question they ought to have prepared a general scheme. He did not say that his right hon. Friend's scheme was the best that could be devised; but it was an honest attempt to steer amongst the most difficult shoals which beset their path—to steer between the Scylla on the one side and the Charybdis on the other, and to show that there was some *vid media* by which they could settle in some way this terribly difficult question. He should be perfectly content to see the question settled, though he should not have objected to allow it to remain as it was at present administered. But the proposal of his right hon. Friend was an endeavour to settle it, and they knew that perfectly well. He thought he might here say something which came to his notice only the other day, as it was most interesting, and did great credit to the Licensing Justices of Essex. In Essex, as he understood, and as it had been told to him, when a man came asking for a fresh licence, stating that it was for some populous place where he alleged another public-house was required, the answer of the Justices was this—"What are you going to give us for the licence? How many licences are you going to give up?" In that way, as he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) understood it, an arrangement was come to, and it was agreed that two or more licences should be given up in less populous places in order that one should be given for a district in which it was required. He commended that system to the House. He commended it especially to his right hon. Friend, because here was a way of doing business without, in such cases, any compensation whatever being paid. But when he came to the question of payment, he did not think there was a man who, if he carefully considered this question—and it was a very difficult one—would not say that if public-houses were suppressed in the country and an examination were made into the circumstances of the districts in order to see where the public-houses were wanted and where they were situated, it would be found that the public-houses suppressed were not those of the strong men, but those of the poorer men. He should like this matter to be fairly considered. If a man had saved his money and invested it in a public-house on the faith that his licence would not be taken away from him unless he committed some act which was against the law and against common decency, the man believing that his licence was as safe as it possibly could be, it would be unfair to turn him out of his occupation without compensation. He might have a beershop or a small public-house, and were they going to tell him (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) that it would be right, under the circumstances, to deprive such a man of his house, and of the living which he had piled up for himself, without giving him some compensation? It would be a downright breach of faith to do so, though he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was not pleading for great compensation. At any rate, compensation of some sort or kind ought to be given to all those who were arbitrarily deprived of their means of living through no fault of their own. He had thought it right to make these remarks, and he believed that if these questions were fairly considered—and he said it in the interest of his right hon. Friend especially, because he and his hon. Colleague, who had taken so much trouble and pains with the Bill, knew and felt the difficulty of the question—they would find it possible to arrive at a settlement. It was a question which, if possible, they ought to settle, because, if they did not settle it, they would have to deal with it piecemeal year by year, to the great disadvantage and detriment not only of the trade, but also of the country, and particularly to the great disadvantage of the House of Commons. There was another question upon which he should like to say a word or two, and that was the question of the main roads. If his right hon. Friend would take the trouble to look through a map of the main roads running through each county in England he would see how some parishes got all the benefits of the main roads while others got none. He did not think that the powers given in the Bill on account of main roads were half sufficient. This was one of those questions which interested the people in the country more almost than anything else, and he would, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman to see whether he could not give them some better definition of what ought to be done. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had been asked to go down into the country next week to speak at a meeting on the subject of roads, and especially main roads. One thing they wanted dealt with was all roads leading from one village to another village, or from one town to another town. They were of opinion that wherever there was a road with a village or a town at each end of it that road, for the purposes of this Bill, ought to be made a main road. He did not say whether or not it would be wise to do this; but it showed the prevailing opinion amongst a large number of people who were most interested in this question. They thought that their roads should be properly kept up, and that the expense should be thrown upon those who used the roads most, and not upon those who used them very little. There was another question in connection with this matter—namely, his right hon. Friend's proposal that all parish roads should be thrown upon the District Councils. He would ask his right hon. Friend to give this matter his most careful consideration. He could take the right hon. Gentleman into the country and show him at this moment many parishes in which the roads were most admirably kept and were in most perfect order, and he could take him down into other parishes and show him roads which were in a most disgraceful state. There was also the *ratione tenuræ* roads, which the public could go through, but which had gates on them. All these roads which were not in a state of repair—and this was the point to which he wished to draw attention—that these particular roads ought not to be taken over by the localities, and he concluded that would be the case till they were placed in a fair state of repair. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider that point, and he would also ask him to consider whether every parish, before it was taken over by the District Council, should not have its roads examined to see that they were not in first-class order, but that they were in a fair state of repair. Would it be fair or honest to say that parishes which had kept their roads in good order, immediately this Bill passed and District Councils were formed, should be called on to pay a tax to place in order the roads of other parishes, which roads had been neglected? No one would say that that was the right way of proceeding, but they would say that when the roads in that parish were put into a fair condition the District Council then would take them over, and then that the whole of the roads would be subject to one general scheme. He had spoken generally on these subjects because it would not do at this stage of the Bill to go into detail. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax in one thing. The right hon. Gentleman had said that there was too much "paper" in the Local Government Office—and he (Sir

Walter B. Barttelot) did not think the Local Government Office was as bad as many other offices in this respect. The right hon. Gentleman meant what some people called "red tape." The sooner they got out of that red tape system in connection with the Army and Navy, or whatever Department it might be, the better the Department would be served. This was a question which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would, no doubt, carefully consider, because, seeing that he was handing over so much of the business of his Department to the rural authorities, he had been invited to say how many clerks he was going to reduce in the office. Into that question he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) did not wish to enter. He desired to say that they had begun this debate, as he thought the House would admit, without a particle of Party feeling. They had, he hoped, started upon a new line which they would do well to follow. When the matters concerned in connection with a Bill of this sort were the welfare and interest of a great country, and they saw and knew that if it became a Party question Party feeling would run high and many portions of the Bill might be lost or disfigured, he ventured to hope and pray that they might continue discussing the Bill in the peaceful spirit in which they had begun. Let this be

> "The star by which we steer,
> Above ourselves our country shall be dear."

They had done well in this country in days gone by, they had now got into a groove in which he hoped they would continue, and they had been held up as the most honourable and the best and most efficient Representative Assembly in the world. They had lost a little of the varnish which was accorded to them in days gone by. Let them recover that and show to the world that when they came to great questions of this kind, great questions that affected the interest and welfare and well-being of the masses of the people, they could do as they had done before, and maintain in the future that ascendancy which they had earned in the past.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he did not propose to follow the hon. and gallant Baronet either into the general criticism he had made on the Bill or into his discussion of some of its details. He would only say that he re-echoed the views which the hon. and gallant Gentleman had expressed in the closing part of his speech. If ever there was a measure brought before the House which it seemed to him ought to be discussed apart from all Party considerations, this was the one. The Bill was one in which they were aiming to improve the local self-government of the whole country; and, although differences of opinion might occasionally arise in the discussion of a measure of the kind, seeing that a great many conflicting interests were raised, whilst they fairly argued out their respective views, he saw no necessity for imparting into any of those views what his hon. and gallant Friend had so strongly deprecated. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) did not intend to follow the hon. and gallant Baronet into a discussion of the question of licences or the question of main roads, or even into the discussion of a question which, perhaps, he might feel a little more strongly upon at the present moment—namely, the expenditure in towns. He would say, in passing, that there was one remark of the hon. and gallant Member's with which he agreed—namely, the undesirability of the police being placed under a divided authority. In the municipal boroughs they had no divided authority. They placed the police under the control of the elected representatives of the people, and, without disparagement to the management of the police elsewhere, he submitted that the police in the large municipal boroughs were managed as efficiently, as economically, and as wisely as in either the Metropolis or the counties. When they came to the discussion of that part of the Bill dealing with the police, he should be quite ready to defend the management of the police by the elected authority in the municipalities, and to express a hope that the ultimate decision of the House would be to trust the County Council at once. Let them trust it. It would be found quite competent, he thought, to discharge the duty of administering the affairs of the police. Passing from that he might say that he thought it would be a great calamity to the country if it were to be deprived of the services of those who, like the hon. and gallant Member himself, had for so many years devoted themselves gratuitously and with the greatest efficiency and economy to the administration of local affairs. Now, the observations he was going to make, he gave the House fair notice, would be of a very dry nature. He was about to deal with the figures of the proposal. If they were going to look at this question and discuss it in what he might call the dry light of its administration, they should be, as far as possible, clear in the figures they used. He thought further statistical information was required; but, at any rate, they had some information as to which he should like to say a word or two to the House. He took it that the object of the Bill was two-fold; they wanted to reform their local self-government, and they wanted to relieve their local taxation. These subjects were inter-dependent, and they were so mixed up the one with the other, that he thought the Government had done rightly in dealing with them together — finding it impossible to deal with local self-government without dealing also with the relief of local taxation. He congratulated the Government that they had at this particular crisis, and in dealing with this great branch of the great question the advantage of the assistance and advice of the statesman who had written the ablest work on the subject, who was one of the greatest living authorities upon it, and who had now added to his knowledge his more recent experience of Chancellor of the Exchequer. He should be very sorry, and should very much doubt his own opinion on this question, if he found himself going in opposition to the views of the right hon. Gentleman as contained in the work to which he referred. In the figures he was going to submit to the House he was very much guided by the principles and calculations which the right hon. Gentleman had laid before the House and the public. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was not going to-night to deal with the question of the reform of local self-government. That had been dealt with by his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), and would be dealt with, no doubt, by a great many other speakers in the course of the debate. He wished to confine himself entirely to the question of figures as affecting the relationship to the new scheme of the municipal boroughs. He thought he might say he was speaking as the first Member who had taken part in the debate as a Member representing the municipal boroughs affected by the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, no doubt, represented the borough of Halifax, and in that way was a Representative of municipal boroughs; but as the right hon. Gentleman had been President of the Local Government Board, he had been obliged to take a broader view of the question altogether than he would have done had he been merely a Representative of municipal boroughs. What was the present amount of local taxation with which this Bill was going to deal, and with respect to which a large measure of relief was required? The gross receipts for local taxation, excluding gas, water, tolls, and markets levied upon the ratepayers in 1866, was £26,142,000, which for purposes of this debate and for simplicity he would call £26,000,000. That, of course, did not include all local expenditure. It appeared much larger in the local returns and statistics, and amounted to £44,000,000, but that included matters outside the purview of rates, and so far as the rates were concerned the figure was as he had stated. The first question was, how was that sum made up, where was it levied, and for what purpose? The first great item was the poor rate, and in speaking of that he dealt exclusively with what he would call the poor rate proper. Local Members would know that a large number of rates were levied in the poor rate, and that nominally the poor rate was something like £14,000,000. He was in that dealing with that which related exclusively to the poor, and which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had described as an hereditary burden on land. He should deal with round figures, and in this case the poor rate was practically £8,500,000. The next item in the calculation was the Metropolis, and, excluding the poor rate and the school board rate, it accounted for £3,500,000; the municipal boroughs and the Urban Sanitary Authorities accounted for £7,500,000; the school board rates for £2,300,000; County Authorities for £2,000,000; Rural Sanitary Authorities, including highways, for under £2,000,000; and the miscellaneous rates arising from Burial Boards, drainage, and other local matters made up the balance of £26,000,000. Before asking the House to form any judgment as to how that sum was to be divided and whence it came, they must divide the education rate. The school board rate, last year, was £2½ millions; £1,000,000 of that sum was paid in London, £650,000 in the municipal boroughs, and £700,000 in the rural and partly rural districts. Thus the calculation, irrespective of the poor rate, would show a total of local taxation £17,500,000, of which £12,750,000 was the urban and £4,750,000 the rural rate, or, in other words, 72½ per cent of the local taxation of the country, irrespective of poor rate, was urban taxation, and 27½ per cent rural taxation. Then a very difficult question arose as to the apportionment of the poor rate, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he made that apportionment of local rates, had dealt with the rural and urban rates on their own separate bases. It would be unjust to attempt any adjustment of the respective incidence of rural and urban taxation unless they dealt with the poor rate. The poor rate proper was, in round figures, £8,500,000, from which £2,250,000 must be deducted for the Metropolis, thus leaving £6,250,000 to be apportioned between urban and rural districts. The rateable value on which this is assessed is £118,000,000, which, at the average rate of 1*s.* 1*d.* in the £, produced that amount. The rateable value of the municipal boroughs acting as Urban Sanitary Authorities is £35,500,000, the rateable value of the boroughs not acting as such is about £3,000,000, and the rateable value of the counties assessed to the police rate is about £80,000,000, and these are the figures composing the £118,000,000 which would show £80,000,000 rural and £38,000,000 urban. But from the £80,000,000 we have to deduct the rateable value of the Urban Sanitary Authorities other than municipal boroughs. There are 736 of these authorities with a rateable value of £20,500,000. No doubt a portion of these authorities cover rural districts. He would allow £5,000,000 for this, and the result would be that of the £118,000,000 assessed for poor rate, £65,000,000 were rural and £53,000,000 were urban. The amount of rate of £6,250,000 would be apportioned—£3,500,000 to the rural districts and £2,750,000 to the urban. The final result of these apportionments would be—

Urban.

	Millions.
Metropolis	3½
Do. Poor	2¼
Do. School	1
Municipal and Urban ..	7½
Do. do. Poor ..	2¾
Do. do. School	¾
Total Urban	17¾

Rural.

	Millions.
County	2
Rural Authorities	2
School	¾
Poor	3½
Total Rural	8¼

That showed a percentage of 68½ for town taxation and 31½ for rural taxation. Hon. Members were all aware that there had been an enormous increase in this taxation. When the Report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to which he had alluded was presented in 1871, the right hon. Gentleman calculated that the entire local taxation of the country was £16,500,000. If the right hon. Gentleman would allow him to say so, he thought that was rather in excess of the real amount, because there were the amounts to be taken into account for gas and water. However that might be, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had classified that £16,500,000, by assigning £5,000,000 to the urban, £3,000,000 to the rural, £8,000,000 to the poor, and £1,000,000 to miscellaneous items. He would now inquire if there had been any increase in the poor rate in the rural districts, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had described as the ancient hereditary burden on land, and which in times gone by had been a heavy and intolerable burden? That rate had been steadily decreasing. In 1856 the poor rate was 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound; in 1866, 1*s.* 4½*d.*; 1876, 1*s.* 2*d.*; and in 1886, 1*s.* 1*d.* There had, in fact, been a steady decrease in the burden of the poor rate, not only during the last 30 years, but during the century. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that in 1803 it was 3*s.* 4½*d.* in the pound; in 1827 2*s.* 5¾*d.*; in 1868 it was 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound, and at the present day it was a fraction over 1*s.* 1*d.* in the pound. Therefore, there had been no increase in the hereditary burden of poor rate. It had been steadily decreasing, and that was one of the happiest signs which they could discern in the financial condition of the country, and it reflected very satisfactorily upon the administration of the Poor Law, which, upon the whole, he believed to have been sound and financially good during the last 30 years. The Local Government Board, in their Report, said that in 1874 the entire local taxation was nearly £19,000,000, and that in 1885 it was between £25,000,000 and £26,000,000, which showed an increase of nearly £7,000,000 in 10 years. Now, he asked, where had that increase occurred? These were the figures of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade—they were in his last Report, and the Local Government Board divided this increase in the following way:—Increase in Metropolitan rates £2,600,000; in exclusively urban districts, £2,700,000; partly urban and partly rural districts, £1,100,000; and the exclusively rural districts, £213,000. He wanted the House to appreciate the force of these figures. The rates of the Metropolis had increased 67 per cent; the great towns and municipal boroughs, 59 per cent; the partly rural and partly urban districts, 13 per cent; and the purely rural districts only 12 per cent. Now, there could be no difference of opinion that with such an increase the time had arrived for some relief to be given to local taxation. The right hon. Gentleman the other night had very properly called the attention of the House to the excessive manner in which the farmer was rated; he said he was rated upon the whole of his rent and, practically, upon his capital. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) entirely agreed with that statement, and he had always contended against the injustice of the present mode by which the agricultural interest was rated. But the same injustice applied to the inhabitants in towns, where you had brokers and bankers and professional men in offices and chambers paying £40 or £50 a-year rent, whereas the draper and grocer was rented at £200 or £300 a-year. It was a great injustice that the whole burden should fall on one description of property, and that it should be so unfairly assessed among those who represented it. He thought that the scheme of the Government in reference to local taxation was wise and generous on the whole; but he was going to ask the House to see that the sum given in relief was fairly apportioned—that was to say, that those who suffered most should benefit most, and that those who suffered least should benefit least. What was the sum which Government were going to give in aid of local taxation? He rejected at once from consideration on both sides of the account the grants discontinued on one side and re-granted on the other—that was to say, the grants in aid of Poor Law purposes, which were in future to be met by local funds and paid out of the Imperial taxation. Taking no account of this, he found that the total amount which the President of the Local Government Board proposed to appropriate was £2,969,873, from which had to be deducted for grants £2,582,434, leaving a balance of old taxes to be handed over to the Local Authorities for local purposes of £387,439. That would be the amount received of the first grant of the old taxes. Then there were the new taxes, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated at £826,000. He was aware that the right hon. Gentleman was a very sound and careful financier; but he thought that perhaps a larger sum than this would be realized. The right hon. Gentleman then proposed to give in aid of local taxation £1,800,000 Probate Duty, which made the total amount to £3,013,439. The House would remember that the amount of local taxation was £26,000,000, so that this relief amounted to 2*s.* 3½*d.* in the pound, or, roughly speaking, one-ninth of local taxation proposed to be relieved out of the Imperial purse. He submitted, in the first instance, that this principle of one-ninth must pervade all classes of taxation. The urban taxation amounted to £17,750,000; the rural to £8,250,000. Then, he said, on every principle of fairness, that the urban taxation should receive about £2,000,000 and the rural taxation about £1,000,000 of this relief, which would then be in equal ratio with the burden, which, as between the two classes of districts, was two to one. Now, what did the Government propose with reference to this apportionment; and that was the first criticism to which he asked the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade? By this Bill it was proposed not only to hand over these funds to the Local Authorities, but it also appropriated them. They had, first, £1,800,000 Probate Duty, which was handed over to the various counties on the basis of the number of indoor paupers. But that would only account for £1,200,000, so that there remained a margin of £600,000. One hon. Gentleman in the course of that debate had said that he should like to know how this sum would ultimately be apportioned. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) thought there would be great disappointment in some quarters, and a great deal of surprise in others, at the way in which this would work out. There was no doubt that the Metropolis would get the lion's share. The number of indoor paupers in the Metropolis was 28 per cent of the total number in the Kingdom, and, therefore, it would have 28 per cent of the grant. He had calculated this, taking the number of indoor paupers as 200,000, and, if that figure were correct, he found that Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, Yorkshire, and Lancashire, five counties, would take £984,000, or more than one-half of the grant. Then he found that five other counties, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and Northamptonshire — fairly representative counties—would only receive £89,000. Now, he made no criticism as to whether or not this was the wisest mode of appropriation. But something might be said as to whether it would tend to increase or decrease the expense of Poor Law administration—whether it would offer an inducement to increase the number of indoor paupers and reduce the amount of outdoor relief. He did not wish the Government to think that he was dissenting from this mode of apportionment, but he wished the House to know how it would be distributed. There would then remain £1,800,000 for general local relief. The next subject he had to refer to was that of the maintenance of main roads. There was a little difficulty in the financial scheme of the Bill in this respect. The Bill said, first, that the main roads should be a general county expenditure, and, having made that provision, it said that this £1,800,000 should be applied first in discharge of the general county expenditure. But the Financial Scheme contemplated that the first contribution should be for the maintenance of main roads. He presumed the Government would make it clear whether or not the County Authorities were to have any option as to the application of the funds to the main roads. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer calculated that the cost of maintenance of the main roads would be £1,040,000. How was this money to be allocated? They had the statement in the Government Returns that the grant of last year of £234,000 represented about a quarter of the cost of the main roads. Of this sum, £152,000 was allocated to the rural authorities and £74,000 to the urban authorities, and the Quarter Session boroughs only received £7,827. Thus the boroughs for which he was going specifically to plead in that House, and which were directly affected by this Bill—the Quarter Session boroughs—received the magnificent sum of £7,827. The towns received 35 per cent and the rural districts 65 per cent of this subvention. If they were to appropriate the £1,040,000 on the same ratio, they would have the country receiving £676,000 and the towns £364,000, while the smaller Quarter Session boroughs would be practically excluded from the grant. But that did not appropriate the whole of the £1,800,000; the rest of it was to be appropriated to the general county expenditure, to which all the country, including the municipal boroughs, was assessed; and in this general county fund, of course, was included the general county expenditure defrayed by the county rates. That would give something like £800,000 to the counties.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, that in the debtor and creditor account which the right hon. Gentleman had given of these grants he had forgotten the £254,000 for main roads which was discontinued.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, that was the difference between the discontinued grants and the new grants. The general county expenditure in boroughs, after deducting the police and main roads, which had been disposed of, was only £1,500,000, and the balance of the grant would go in relief of this expenditure. His right hon.

Friend was perfectly accurate in saying that this abolition would relieve all the ratepayers in the counties, including, of course, the ratepayers who lived in the boroughs; and those hon. Members who were familiar with the relations between the boroughs and counties would know that the urban districts were rated for general county purposes. There were certain expenses for which the whole boroughs were liable, and his right hon. Friend would say that these were going to be relieved to that extent. But with reference to this matter he must use a legal phrase, and say that they must marshal the burdens of local taxation to which the ratepayer was subject, and then they must marshal the burdens in respect of which they were to be relieved. The lowest county rate in England was three-eighths of a penny in the pound and the highest 5¼*d.*, the average being about 3*d.* in the pound. The average urban rate was 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, and he would point out that a 1*d.* in 2*s.* 6*d.* was a very different thing from a 1*d.* in 3*d.* For instance he was paying 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound to local taxation, 1*d.* of which went to the county; his neighbour at a short distance was paying 3*d.* in the pound, and if they were both going to be relieved by 1*d.* in the pound, one would be relieved to the extent of 33 per cent, and the other of 3 per cent. He maintained, therefore, that if relief was intended it must be proportional; it was the minimum of justice to allot the relief in precisely the same proportion to the same classes of rates, and therefore the municipal burden was entitled to be relieved in the same proportion as the rural burden was relieved. His next question was as to whence the funds came from which the right hon. Gentleman was going to make the appropriation. The right hon Gentleman was not going to take this sum of £1,800,000 from the Chancellor of the Exchequer or from Imperial taxation; he was going to take it from certain taxes paid in certain localities. If the county was to have the benefit of taxation raised in the county, were not the municipal boroughs to have the benefit of the taxation raised in the boroughs? He said that the municipal boroughs deserved well of the country; they had done their duty, they had developed the whole principle of local government, and the county government proposal was merely based on the desire to adopt and extend the system which had worked so satisfactorily in the boroughs; and if certain taxes paid by them into the Exchequer were to be considered, then he said that the taxes paid in them should go to the boroughs direct. They were raised in and belonged to the boroughs, and the latter had fully discharged their duties of local administration; they were fully taxed, and he put it to the Government as a matter of justice to say why it was that Birmingham should have these local taxes in aid of local rates, and Wolverhampton be compelled to hand them over to a county 50 miles long and 30 miles wide, with which it had no connection whatever. The right hon. Gentleman had said in reply to him that he could not give figures to show how this taxation scheme would work out, but he was going to give the House some figures which had been supplied to him by the courtesy of the Local Authorities in Wolverhampton, and would show exactly how the scheme would work as between Wolverhampton and the county of Stafford. Hon. Gentlemen would know that a Quarter Sessions borough with 80,000 inhabitants was a very fair type of an English borough. The county of Stafford had a rateable value of £4,260,000, and its county and police rates were between 5*d.* and 6*d.* in the pound, leaving the poor rate entirely out of the calculation. The municipal and sanitary rates of Wolverhampton amounted to 4*s.* 2¼*d.*; the school board and library rate was 7¾*d.*; making a total of 4*s.* 10*d.* What was the case of the county? Twenty years ago in the county of Stafford the county rate was 3*d.* in the pound, in 1884 2½*d.*, to-day 3½*d.*, and might practically be said to be stationary. The average for Wolverhampton for many years, including poor rate, had been 5*s.* 9*d.*, and he regretted to say that this year they were 7*s.* 3*d.* in the pound. The right hon. Gentleman said he could not tell what sum the localities would get, but he had in his hand a statement prepared by the Authorities of the Inland Revenue in Wolverhampton which would give figures with regard to that borough.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the right hon. Gentleman was not taking into account the rates of the other areas within the county; he was comparing the rates in municipal boroughs with the county rates alone.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he perfectly understood the distinction; but the whole of the Government subvention would go to the county rate.

Mr. RITCHIE: No.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, his case was that, no matter how the other areas were affected, the municipal taxation was going to be taken out of the municipal borough and applied elsewhere. In Wolverhampton, the Inland Revenue Authorities estimated that the transferred licences would produce £5,334, and that the local taxes to be transferred to the County Councils would yield £2,933, making a total of £8,267 from all licences. He agreed that it was impossible to calculate what the new licences would produce; but here again the Inland Revenue Authorities estimated that the Horse and Wheel Taxes would produce £1,680, which would raise the total to £9,947. Adding 20 per cent for licences would raise the total to £11,000. The grants in aid now received amounted to £5,650, and that left a balance of £5,358, which would be paid to the county authority. The right hon. Gentleman would say he was not calculating the Probate Duty contribution for indoor paupers. It was impossible to calculate what the Probate Duty paid in the borough would be. In the whole county of Stafford there were 6,872 indoor paupers, which would entitle it to receive a grant of about £62,000, of which sum the Unions would get £42,000, and there would be a profit of £20,000. The estimated grant in respect of Wolverhampton would be about £4,000, which would give the county a profit of £1,600 upon paupers alone.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he did not understand how the right hon. Gentleman calculated the amount which Wolverhampton would receive for paupers.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he had only taken the paupers of the borough. The Union included other townships. His authority was the clerk to the Poor Law Guardians. If he was right, the House would see that there was about £6,000 of Wolverhampton taxation to be handed over to the county of Stafford. Wolverhampton was now, for the first time, to be brought into the county of Stafford for the purpose of assessment for main roads. There were in the county 688 miles of main roads. In Wolverhampton there were only two miles. Its present taxation for county purposes was 1*d.* in the pound. Municipal boroughs in counties ought to be self contained, and in that case the borough of Wolverhampton would receive between £5,000 and £6,000 in aid of its local taxation.

Mr. RITCHIE: Am I right in unstanding the right hon. Gentleman to say that Wolverhampton ought to receive £5,700 in addition to the sum allowed?

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: Yes; irrespective of the sum on account of paupers. What was the practical bearing of his statement? His point was this—they were all agreed that this relief should be granted to local taxation, and they were, he felt sure, also agreed that it should be fairly apportioned. He fully admitted that unless the right hon. Gentleman were omniscient and infallible, he could not draw a Bill of this magnitude and complexity without its being open to criticism in some of its details. And consequently he implied no blame or censure when he said that the same measure of justice which was dealt out to the 10 great boroughs, and to the nine boroughs with their populations of 100,000, should be dealt out also to the middle class boroughs which had discharged their municipal duties, which were bearing the burden of taxation, and which were entitled to be relieved. Unless those boroughs were made independent of the counties, grave injustice would be done to them. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that so far as the boroughs were concerned there was no desire in any way to impede the work or throw any difficulties in the way of this scheme. They believed in Local Government, they desired to see it extended, but they, at the same time, asked him not to put upon the face of the Bill a taint of injustice or to give them a standing grievance. Wolverhampton was anxious that the county of Stafford should enjoy the same benefits which the inhabitants believed they had derived from an improved system of Local Government, but they urged that the borough should not be fined £5,000 to enable the county to receive that benefit. He merely asked that they should be given their own, and the grievance being removed, so far as the rural and urban districts were concerned, he thought there would be little ground for complaint. He admitted the difficulties with which the right hon. Gentleman had to contend, but he asked him that the boroughs having their own Quarter Sessions and police, discharging all their municipal duties, and with populations approaching 80,000 or 90,000 inhabitants, should be put upon the same footing as the other boroughs. If the right hon. Gentleman would concede this point, he believed he would then remove the only sense of injustice which, so far as he was aware, had arisen with respect to the Bill. There might be some difference of opinion as to the wisdom of some of the provisions of the Bill, but, on the whole, he thought the scheme was a good one, and they wished to see it carried.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he was quite sure that no one who had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had found it in the least dull or dry. It was quite beyond his (Sir Richard Webster's) province to reply to what he might call the detailed financial argument so clearly put before the House by the right hon. Gentleman. If all other boroughs found as able an advocate as the right hon. Gentleman, he was sure the House would have no reason to regret the spirit in which the debate was conducted. The right hon. Gentleman would agree with him, however, that the figures which he had quoted ought to be checked and tested by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), or by some one who had to conduct the financial policy of the Bill. He should like to remind the House of one or two matters which ought to be considered by any hon. Member who intended to approach the question from the same point of view as that of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had drawn a comparison between the amount of rates paid in urban and rural districts. But it must be clearly borne in mind that there was a broad distinction between the purposes for which the money had to be spent in each case. There were some general considerations which ought not to be lost sight of. Birmingham had been referred to. He knew a good deal about the expenditure in Birmingham, and he did not take Birmingham as a typical borough. Although the Municipal Authority had done its work most admirably, he doubted whether it would be prudent for all municipalities to spend money on the same lavish scale and with the same magnificence as Birmingham. What was the reason why the rates were so high in urban as compared with country districts? Drainage and sewage works had been carried out to a much greater extent in the urban districts than in the rural districts. The expenses of paving, kerbing, and channelling the streets were infinitely more heavy per mile of road in the urban than in the rural districts. The borough buildings, too, which had to be erected were, as a rule, magnificent, and the ratepayers had still to bear the cost of them. There were also baths and washhouses, parks, and free libraries. Although, therefore, it might be true that the borough ratepayer had to pay 2*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* 6*d.*, it had to be remembered that he received practical value for his money, because he was gathering around his dwelling improved streets, which heightened the value of his property. The same observation applied to free libraries, parks, and other buildings. It would, therefore, be most unwise to base any division of contribution to be paid in aid of local rates on a mere comparison of the amount paid by the urban authorities as compared with the rural authorities. While estimating burdens, they also must estimate the benefits. Passing to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), he (Sir Richard Webster) must say he had heard with pleasure the tone of the criticisms which it contained. They all recognized the great authority with which the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to speak on those questions. One of the most important of his criticisms upon the Bill was that it excluded from its scope the Poor Law system, but should the House consider what must have been the result of including in that measure—which was already a measure of enormous magnitude, branching out into a great variety of most difficult subjects—the great question of the Poor Law system. He was not arguing that that system was not one which required examination and amendment, but he maintained that if it had been taken up in connection with this Bill the Poor Law system either could not have received one-tenth of the discussion in the House which would be necessary or satisfactory to the country, or it would have occupied by itself far more time than it would have been practicable to devote to it consistently with the passing of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the question of the incidence of the poor rate and Poor Law assessment; and no doubt nothing was more unjust than the way in which that burden often fell. For example, they had a stockbroker carrying on a large business in an office in the City of London, and paying, it might be, £150 or £200 a-year as rent for his office, while he was making perhaps £10,000 or £15,000 of annual profits; and yet he, practically speaking, paid scarcely anything to the poor rate, his contribution being based only on the value of the rooms he occupied; whereas the tradesman in a town, who must have large premises, and had, perhaps, a large capital in his business, and who was only making, it might be, a return of a few hundreds a-year, was heavily assessed to the poor rate. The Government felt as strongly as anyone that if they dealt with the Poor Law system, one of the questions which must present themselves was how to adapt the basis on which the poor rate rested under the Statute of Elizabeth to the way in which in modern times incomes were earned and property was held, and it would be impossible to deal with the Poor Law system and yet to shelve that question which, if fairly handled, would itself involve probably three or four nights' discussion. Then the right hon. Gentleman referred to the necessity of unity of rating, and pointed out the anomalies which existed, mentioning that, for the purpose of county rate and poor rate, there were even now differences of assessment in some counties. It was quite necessary that those anomalies should ultimately be, if not all removed, at least greatly remedied; but let them consider what that involved. Scarcely a Session passed without a Bill being brought in by some Member of experience dealing with the questions of what was rateable property, whether machinery should be included, and matters of that kind; and if the Poor Law system was to be dealt with at all it must be dealt with as a whole. It would thus be impossible to include the question of the Poor Law system in this Bill without endangering the whole measure. They were now constituting a County Council, and they did not know how it would prove itself capable to do the work put upon it. It would be well to allow the County Council to gain a little experience before burdening it with all those difficult questions connected with the Poor Law. He, therefore, could not help thinking that his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board had exercised a wise judgment and discretion in not overloading his ship in such a manner as might endanger its prospects of safely reaching port. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax said they were setting up on one side the Assessment Committee, and on the other side the authority of the Board of Guardians. That, however, was only another incident of the compulsory exclusion of the Poor Law system from the Bill; and it would be of no use removing the question of the poor rate and Poor Law administration from the Guardians and the Assessment Committees unless they were prepared to deal with the question as a whole. With regard to the control of the police, he submitted that it would have been impossible for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to have gone further than he had in the present Bill. It was not possible for him to transfer at once to a new body not yet created the whole of the powers over the police. It had been said—"Why not trust the County Councils at once, and hand over to them the control of the police?" It seemed to him that such a step as that ought to be taken only after great care and deliberation, and when it was quite certain that there would be men on the Councils who were best fitted, from their experience in the past, to deal with such a matter. It would at least be prudent for a time to continue the control of the police in the hands of those who had so efficiently discharged the duty in the past. Nobody would deny that the county magistrates had managed the police with perfect prudence and judgment, and with very great economy. They had to remember that the judicial duties were not to be transferred to the new Councils, and it would be unwise at once to take away from the county magistrates the control over the police, when they were leaving most important functions still to be exercised by the magistrates which would involve their being brought into contact with the force. As to the question of selected members, it was not necessary, on the Motion for the Second Reading, to go into details which would be better left for the Committee stage. But he would ask hon. Members to be very careful not to impair the efficiency of the County Councils, which were likely, in his opinion, to be very materially improved by the presence upon them of selected members. He doubted whether the criticism was quite just which said that, speaking generally, selected members in boroughs had failed. He should have thought that there was not much fault to be found with the aldermanic system, although, no doubt, mistakes were to be found under all systems. One of the most pleasant things about the discussions on this Bill was that those who had served their counties well in the past had expressed themselves as willing to continue their services on the new Councils in the future. But it did not always follow that men of experience and ability were popular and would always be elected, and it was very desirable that it should be in the power of the elected members to secure the services of men of experience who were likely to be of value in the Council. If they once accepted that principle the fixing of a period during which they should serve was a minor matter. He submitted that there was an efficient and effective amount of control over the transfer to the County Councils of the increased duties which it was in contemplation to impose upon them. With respect to the point raised by the hon. Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse), he (Sir Richard Webster) did not think it was of any great importance, as he could not imagine anything worse than a Member of Parliament elected to a County Council being called upon to vote upon some burning question with respect to the business of the Council when he would have to decide the matter in the House. The same observation applied to the suggestion that members of the District Councils should also be members of the County Council. The better the selection of members for the County Councils, the better for the ratepayers; but he hoped that no proposal would be accepted by the House by which the Members of Parliament for a particular county were to be regarded as *ex officio* members of the County Council. The question as to whether owners should be allowed to vote was worth consideration; but it must not be thought that owners of property would be excluded from the franchise under the Municipal Corporations Act. The qualification of occupation of a house, shop, or building had been held to include the occupation of even a wooden erection used for storing potatoes, and it would be a very exceptional case in which land was without some building in respect of which the occupation franchise could be claimed. He had now ventured to reply to all the objections taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. The object of the Government had been so to start an improved system of local government as to remove from the question, not only in the present Session, but in future Sessions, the possibility of hostile discussion. They desired to create bodies capable of development for useful work, and on which the capacity of members for doing the county work would be likely to be cultivated and improved. If there was one thing which augured the success of the proposals it was the criticism which had been applied to the Bill, which showed that on this particular matter there was one opinion and desire in all parts of the House that the scheme should be—so far as Parliament could make it—entirely efficient and successful.

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) said, for more than 20 years past he had sought to gain in all parts of the Kingdom, and in other countries where free institutions existed, all the information he could collect bearing on the question of Local Government; and, with the aid of the best literary and legal assistance he could enlist in the cause, he had sought to bring the results before statesmen, Members of Parliament, and all those interested in the subject. With the experience he had gained he was afraid he could not take quite the same sanguine view as had been so generally expressed of the Bill as it now stood, though he hoped that, with Amendments that might be made in Committee, it would not fail, as it otherwise would fail, to carry out the objects so clearly stated by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. He listened with great attention to the very able speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), with whom, or rather under whom, he had long worked upon this question, and he was afraid his right hon. Friend assumed too sanguinely that all men were actuated by the same strong sense of duty and indomitable courage that had always guided his right hon. Friend in his own public life. His right hon. Friend assumed, more than it was safe to assume, that where duties were permitted they would be performed, however difficult, unpopular, and disagreeable those duties might be. He did not think the House should assume, in dealing with the Bill, that all the duties that were permitted would be carried out with the same efficiency as those which were enacted. In what he proposed to bring before the House he would try to state the effect of the Bill, what it would produce by its positive enactments, and not assume, as they could not reasonably do, that all it permitted would be equally effective. He thought all would agree that no Ministry in modern times had ever occupied a position so commanding, to enable it to carry out a really efficient reform of local self-government, as the present Ministry. As a Conservative Ministry, they were fully assured that their measure would not be destroyed or mutilated in the House of Lords. They were allowed by their supporters to promise the widest possible extension of popular franchise. They had a Chancellor of the Exchequer who could offer £3,000,000 to the relief of local taxation from the Imperial Exchequer; a statesman who, 17 years ago, criticized in the most powerful manner our system of local administration as "chaos as regards authorities, chaos as regards rates, and the greatest chaos of all in regard to areas," and who denounced the system of rating as unfair to the weaker and less wealthy part of the community. From that time Liberal statesmen, and especially the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), had enforced in the strongest manner the danger of giving relief to local rates from the Imperial Exchequer, so long as the system of local administration was so confused and complicated that it was impossible for the ratepayers to exercise any efficient control or take any intelligent interest in local taxation or administration; they could not know who was taxing or governing them. It would be merely like pouring water into a sieve, leaving local affairs less satisfactory than before, and the burden of maladministration would be aggravated. He must say, looking at the position of the Government, he was disappointed when the Bill was introduced, and when, after the most careful consideration, he had sought in vain for reform in the direction of simplification and consolidation of Local Government, that as a pupil of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he had so long laboured to promote it.

He would give his reasons for supposing that the Bill would not do its work.

He joined heartily in acknowledging the able and clear manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had introduced the measure, and admitted that it contained many valuable provisions. All Liberals would rejoice that the vivifying and energetic influences of free institutions were to be applied to rural districts; and no doubt it would be found that, as in municipal life, active participation in public affairs would not only promote interest in public matters, but stimulate energy and enterprize in their own country. He thought the proposal for the publication annually of a Local Budget would be a most valuable provision, enabling inhabitants of a locality to understand what had been done and what was proposed to be done for them. He also thought that it was most judicious to give relief at the rate of 2*s.* 4*d.* a-week for each indoor pauper. He believed that the cost of indoor paupers was about 3*s.* 6*d.* per week per head, and the ordinary relief to outdoor paupers about 1*s.* per week per head; so the provision in the Bill would equalize the apparent cost of indoor and outdoor relief, and leave the minds of the Guardians unbiassed by any idea of mistaken economy, and they would not be induced to give unwise outdoor relief, to the injury of the self-reliance and independence of the people. It was also a wise proposal to remedy the injustice by which personal property did not contribute towards the expenditure of localities at all in proportion to the advantages the owners of personal property derived from that expenditure. To show that he was right in his contention that the Bill did not effect the reforms required in the simplification of authorities, areas, and rating, he would endeavour to explain the results of applying the provisions of the Bill to different parts of the country. First, he would take a Northern populous Union, that of West Derby, one with which he was best acquainted. In 1881 the population was 355,000, and it was rapidly increasing. It had 10 Local Boards; one borough, that of Bootle; one Board of Guardians, three Burial Boards, one School Board, one Highway Board; in all, 17 Local Authorities within the boundaries of the Union. Ten Local Boards would remain under the Bill, but they would become local districts. The borough of Bootle would remain, so would the School Board, and the Board of Guardians, but shorn of their sanitary authority. The three Burial Boards would seem to be disestablished by the Bill. But there was no provision in the Bill for forming District Councils in large boroughs, such as Liverpool, and two of these Burial Boards were within the boundaries of Liverpool, the other partially so, so that only half a Burial Board would be disestablished. But there would be still 13 of the existing Local Authorities, though some of them under different names, and a new District Council being added would make 14, instead of 17, all in the Union of West Derby. When they examined whether these Local Districts and Councils which were perpetuated were of a size to do good work or attract able men, they found that in one of the local districts there were only 197 inhabitants; in another, 553; another, 830; and another, 2,486. In the County of the City of Liverpool, as the Bill stood, there would be hardly any change. There were 10 Governing Bodies there now; but he presumed the provisions of the Bill would disestablish five Burial Boards, but that was all the simplification the Bill would effect in Liverpool. He supposed this meant that the President of the Local Government Board considered the arrangements there as perfect as they need be.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Postponed Resolutions [9th April] *reported.*

Resolutions Four and Fourteen *further considered.*

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had agreed to the postponement of this Resolution until to-night, in order that he (Mr. Buchanan) might endeavour to elicit some information from the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) in regard to the condition of things at Lake Nyassa and in the neighbourhood. In the Vote there was a sum of £180 voted for Consular buildings there, and two years ago a sum of £1,000 was voted for the Consulate at Nyassa; therefore, as the House had agreed to expenditure on the Consulate there, he might fairly urge that the Government should do something for the protection of British subjects in that part of the world. The House was aware of what had recently taken place at Nyassa. The settlement of Karonga had been attacked by a raid of Arabs from the North-West from the district around Lake Tanganyika, and the attack had been warded off. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary was aware of all the facts. The attack was defeated by the efforts of the settlers, but there was still great anxiety felt as to the fate of those who remained after the Consul and his supporters withdrew from the district attacked. Though the latest accounts somewhat lessened the anxiety, undoubtedly the members of the Mission Stations and the commercial settlers were in a very critical position. First they were exposed to a combined attack by Arabs from the North-West, and, on the other hand, they had their only available route to the Lake country from the port of

Quilimane by the Shire and Zambesi gradually being closed by the Portuguese, who were not only imposing increasing duties on whatever might be sent in, but had recently seized a British vessel there. So, not only were the Nyassa settlers in continual danger from the Arabs, but they were also in danger of having their communication with the outside world shut off by the Portuguese. Therefore, he wished to urge on the Foreign Office some means of protection for the missionary and commercial interests of British subjects at Nyassa and the African Lakes district. In the last two years we had spent more than £1,000 on the Consulate, and he would suggest that to make the outlay effectual we should increase the power of the Consul in the district, providing him with a steam launch on the Lake, and a small armed force for its protection. Also he might be enabled to raise some kind of Native Consular force for the protection of British interests where there was no administrative authority but his own. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary knew—but it was worth while recalling the fact—that this part of Central Africa was first opened up by the discoveries of Dr. Livingstone and the explorations of other enterprizing Englishmen, and the Government encouraged settlers to go there, attaching as conditions to the recognition of their interests that there should be no sale to the Natives of ammunition or liquor. He believed that these conditions had been strictly observed, and there was every promise of these becoming the most flourishing settlements in Africa. He urged upon the Foreign Office the duty of keeping open the only permanent, effective, and available route from the outside to this district by the Zambesi River. Since he had put Questions on the subject to the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary the Sultan of Zanzibar had died. The Sultan in former times exercised great authority outside the actual limits of his jurisdiction over the Arab populations. Had this influence diminished, or was it no longer exercised? Would the Foreign Office endeavour to induce the Successor to Sultan Burghash to use the same controlling influence over Arab marauders who came down to the settlements and did all in their power to revive the African Slave Trade in an active form? To put down this Slave Trade we had spent hundreds of thousands of pounds, and still voted tens of thousands every year, while the trade was still fostered by the Arabs. There were ample grounds for urging on the Government some steps for the protection of British interests at these Lake settlements.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) said, he must apologize to the hon. and learned Member for not being ready to answer his Question on a previous occasion, though he might be excused, because in Committee on the Vote no observations were made upon any item. Upon the points to which the hon. and learned Member had directed his remarks he might say a few words, and hoped they would be satisfactory. The hon. and learned Member had referred to recent events at Nyassa, in which great gallantry was displayed by a few European residents, acting in concert with Native tribes, between whom and themselves feelings of mutual confidence had grown up. One or two European settlements were menaced by one of those marauding Arab bands that infested the country to the great distress of the inhabitants. Joining hands with Native tribes, retaliatory measures were taken, and a blow was struck at the Arabs, which he hoped would for some time secure more peace in that region. The Arab position was carried by the Europeans leading Native tribes, who, according to some accounts, seconded their leaders but badly; but in the result the Arab position was severely damaged, and the European residents were relieved from the apprehension of immediate danger. It was most likely that in due time further measures would be taken by the settlers for their own protection. The settlers in this distant region had shown the greatest courage and the ability, so far, to defend themselves; but it could not be doubted that there was considerable ground for apprehension in the minds of those who had invested large sums of money in these Central African enterprizes. The question raised was how far Her Majesty's Government ought to give material support to British subjects in that part of the world, and it was a very serious question. They had to consider that those settlements could not be approached through British territory at all, or even through territory over which this country exercised a Protectorate; and it was a difficult matter to consider how, under such circumstances, military responsibility could be entered upon. He was afraid that those who went so far into the interior on commercial or missionary enterprize must be prepared to incur great risks, without any great expectations of being supported by the country, unless, indeed, engagements in that direction had been entered into such as the hon. and learned Member would not say existed in this case. The hon. and learned Member had pointed out the importance of maintaining the great highway up the Zambesi River, and, undoubtedly, this was a legitimate object for Her Majesty's Government to seek to attain. Unfortunately, it did not come within the scope of the Berlin Agreement, which had reference to the Congo River. Nevertheless, it was the object of Her Majesty's Government to maintain freedom of access by the Zambesi, which was the only route by which these settlements could practically be approached. Of course, while Africa was being extensively colonized and European influence spreading in that dark Continent, settlers must have the sea-board for a base; you cannot commence in the centre of the Continent; you would only involve yourselves in enormous responsibilities and troubles. The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to the beneficial influence that might be exercised through Zanzibar, and he (Sir James Fergusson) was happy to say the new Sultan appeared fully willing to carry out all the engagements into which his Predecessor entered; and he felt quite sure that all the influence the Sultan could bring to bear for the suppression of the Slave Trade, and the discouragement of expeditions into the interior would be exercised. By that influence he hoped something might be done to facilitate intercourse between the sea and the great lakes, or inland seas, by which so much had been done by Englishmen to introduce civilization into the heart of the Continent. But he should not be doing his duty if he did not state frankly that Her Majesty's Government could not undertake military responsibilities in so distant a region, and that military responsibility could not be limited when once an armed force was employed by the Consul there. He hoped the hon. and learned Member would be satisfied with what had been said, and he might be assured that the interests of our countrymen in that distant region would not be lost sight of as far as they could properly be followed.

Commander **BETHELL** (York, E.R., Holderness) said, unless something was done without delay, the Zambesi, as a means of access, would be gone altogether. Already the Portuguese had begun to colour their maps, including this in their territory.

Sir **JAMES FERGUSSON** said, he had intended to point out that Her Majesty's Government were fully aware of their duty in this regard, and their endeavour was to keep open this water highway.

Mr. **BUCHANAN** said, he acknowledged the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State. By the indulgence of the House he might be allowed to say that he did not ask that any military responsibility or military expenditure should be incurred, but that the position of the Consul, upon whom we had already spent much money, should be strengthened.

Postponed Resolutions *agreed to.*

MOTIONS.

MARRIAGES OF NONCONFORMISTS (ATTENDANCE OF REGISTRARS) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Attendance of Registrars at Marriages in Nonconformist Chapels, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Richard, Mr. Illingworth, and Mr. Waddy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 205.]

PARTNERSHIP BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hill, Bill to consolidate the Law of Partnership, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Seale-Hayne.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 206.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (AMENDMENT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to amend section one of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," in regard to leaseholders, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, and Mr. Sinclair.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 207.]

House adjourned at twenty five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 13*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — High Sheriffs, Lord Coleridge *added*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Customs (Isle of Man* (60); Copyright (Musical Compositions * (61); Metropolitan Board of Works Commission* (62).

Second Reading—Women's Suffrage (52), *negatived.*

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL — *First Reading*— Local Government (Ireland) (Coleraine, &c.)* (63).

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL.—(No. 52.)

(*The Lord Denman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD DENMAN said, he must congratulate their Lordships and the country, that—

> "Solvitur acris hyems gratâ vice veris et Favoni."

He had brought this Bill forward as the 6th June was the earliest day at which the question could come on in "another place." He had seen two Bills on the same subject — the Law of Evidence Amendment Bills—to be before both Houses at the same time; and he offered to bring forward a repetition of Baron Dimsdale's Bill, but his offer was declined. There certainly were great facilities for advancing legislation in their Lordships' House. A second reading there was supposed to forward the chances of success of the Bill in the House of Commons. The Bill for Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister was appointed for Wednesday, the 18th April, and he had always asserted that it should be preceded by a Women's Suffrage Bill. In 1884, on 9th July, he had such a Bill in the Orders of day for 10th July. The Earl of Wemyss had engaged 29 Peers, of whom he (Lord Denman) was one, to sit from 15th July for any length of time necessary for the despatch of Business; and he (Lord Denman) alluded to his letter on 2nd September, 1886. It requested him to postpone his Bill, in order that their Lordships might divide on the Marriage Bill before dinner. He declined to support the noble Earl on those terms. It had been said that Bills relating to the representation of the people should originate in the House of Commons; but the Septennial Bill was brought into their Lordships' House by a Duke of Devonshire, in 1716. It was designed to allay the heats and animosities of Parties, which were then, as they always are, injurious to all the people of the Realm. He (Lord Denman) was reminded of the verse by Cowper—once a Clerk of their Lordships' House —

> "Tyranny sends the chain that shall abridge
> The noble sweep of all their privilege,
> Gives liberty the mortal shock,
> Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock."

If this Bill was put off for months, care should be taken, if calendar months were named, that the day of the second reading should not fall on a Sunday, a Wednesday, or a Saturday. Women were expressly excluded by Baron Dimsdale's Bill; but he (Lord Denman) believed that they were "legally disqualified." Lord Chief Justice Lee said, though a woman could vote for a sexton and be a sexton, she could not vote for nor be a Member of Parliament, for the sexton was concerned with the interment of the dead, but a Member of Parliament with the morals of the living. In the New Zealand Parliament it was said that if a woman voted against the will of her husband, he might wring or break her neck ; this attempt to introduce women under coverture threw out the Bill. He would, if doubt existed, exclude married and divorced women in Committee. On the 28th April, 1887, he declared he would bring in the Bill again on 5th August, not before six calendar or lunar months. He would recall the facts to their Lordships. Two years ago he brought forward this question, and the late Earl Cairns wrote to him with regard to it on the 9th July—a very eventful and trying period, for it preceded the time which put an end to all Business because of the pressure put on Parliament in regard to the Representation of the People Bill. His Lordship said—

"I hear that your Women's Suffrage Bill stands for to-morrow. I take an interest in the question, and should be sorry if anything were to lead to its having an unfavourable reception in the House; but it stands before Lord Houghton's Marriage Bill, and the House will be impatient to come to a Division on that Bill before dinner. Might I suggest for your consideration the desirability of postponing the Bill to the next open evening."

He (Lord Denman) would wait and see the progress of Baron Dimsdale's Bill, and not appoint a Committee.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

The LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Viscount Cranbrook) said, he must apologize for interfering with the chivalrous Motion which the noble Lord had so often repeated; but, in the absence of his noble Friend at the head of the Government (the Marquess of Salisbury), who last year moved the rejection of a similar Bill, he must say that he thought the time for moving the second reading of this Bill was inopportune. Anyone who looked at the appearance of their Lordships' House that night would see that that was not the occasion when they ought to undertake the responsibility of altering the suffrage which regulated the election of Members of Parliament; and without further preface, and without expressing an opinion one way or other with regard to the question, he would take the course pursued on a former occasion, and move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment *moved,* to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord President.*)

Lord DENMAN: May I ask the noble Viscount whether he means lunar or calendar months?

Viscount CRANBROOK: That is a matter on which I must refer my noble Friend to my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury): If the noble Lord refers the question to me, I should say that, as a point of law, it must mean lunar months. That is what a month was originally by law. Then came an Act of Parliament which made "months" calendar months; but that did not extend to proceedings in Parliament. Therefore, according to the Law of Parliament, this Motion would apply to lunar months.

On Question, That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion?

Resolved in the *negative.*

Bill to be read 2ª *this day six months.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (COLERAINE, &c.) BILL [H.L.],

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Coleraine, Longford, and Tandragee—Was *presented* by The Lord President (for The Lord Privy Seal); read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 63.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 13*th April,* 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—*Special Report*—Committee of Selection (Standing Committees).

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Weekly Wages* [208]; Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses (No. 2)* [209]; Livery Franchise (London) Abolition* [210].

Second Reading—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Second Night*], *debate further adjourned;* Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) [129], *debate adjourned.*

Committed to Standing Committee on Law, &c.—Mortmain and Charitable Uses* [174]; Bail (Scotland)* [172].

Committee—*Report*—Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment* [154].

Withdrawn—Vaccination* [77].

QUESTIONS.

INDIA—THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA—THE RETURN.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he can now state to the House, whether the Government of India will consent to grant the Return asked for last month, as to moneys paid to the Irrawaddy Flotilla; whether the Government are the largest shippers by the Flotilla, and pay 26 rupees per ton freight from Rangoon to Mandalay; and, whether private shippers pay from 15 rupees per ton to 20 rupees per ton freight for the same voyage?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.)

(who replied) said: No, Sir; there has not yet been time to consult the Government of India since the hon. Member's previous Question. The Secretary of State has no official information as to the rates and amounts shipped by the Government and private shippers respectively.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—DAIRY SCHOOLS—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, as representing the Committee of the Privy Council on Agriculture, Whether the Government intend to act upon the recommendations of the Committee appointed to inquire into the question of dairy schools, and to make a grant to such schools; and, if so, whether they intend to lay down any Rules or Regulations for the conduct of such schools; and, what steps should be taken by any agricultural school desirous of applying for the grant?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes): The Agricultural Department is not yet in possession of the funds, nor has it yet a staff at its disposal for the needful inquiries. We shall be ready to receive applications for consideration by the Department which may be intrusted with the duty of dealing with them.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COUNTY COUNCIL FOR LIVERPOOL—MERSEY DOCK AND HARBOUR BOARD.

Mr. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board will be absorbed in the proposed County Council for Liverpool; and, if so, whether any Representatives of the Board of Trade will be allowed to sit upon the Board; and, whether, under the proposed County Government Bill, any representation of the bondholders of the Trust will be possible?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) (who replied) said: The Local Government Bill does not transfer to the County Council of Liverpool the powers and duties of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—THE EVIDENCE.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the evidence taken recently by the Fishery Board for Scotland at Aberdeen will be laid upon the Table?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The evidence referred to by the hon. Member and the Board's Report thereon, which is in course of adjustment, are expected to reach London from Scotland in a few days. It would be irregular to state what course will be followed until the documents have been received.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SHETLAND MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can make a statement as to the new arrangements which he has proposed to the Treasury with regard to the Shetland Mail Service?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I very much regret I cannot at present add to the reply which I gave on the 27th of March—namely, that I am giving careful consideration to the Memorials for the improvement of the Postal Service between Aberdeen and Lerwick, and am in communication with the Treasury on the subject. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will address himself to that Department.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — ATTENDANCE AT THE HOUSE, &c.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the police constables on duty at the National Gallery, the British Museum, and other buildings are in receipt of 1*s.* a-day above their regular salary; whether the police constables on night watch in this House are in the same position as those on day duty; and, whether the Chief Commissioner's new Regulation is to apply to all alike; and, if not, would he explain the reason?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The police constables on night duty in this House are in the same position as those on day duty only as regards pay. Their duties are special and peculiar, having reference to the safety of the buildings. They are also paid on a different Vote—namely, that of the Office of Works. The new Regulation applies to all alike, in so far as the Commissioner may consider desirable.

SCOTLAND — ALLEGED MURDER OF JOHN MACKAY IN THE HEBRIDES.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement regarding the death of her son, published by Mrs. John Mackay, a widow in South Harris:—

> "My son, John Mackay, aged 17 years, was reported before as having died from exposure. Such was not the case. I have no doubt he was murdered, for he was stabbed in two places, besides several other marks of violence on his body. His bootlaces were cut with a knife, and his trousers torn off him, and found about 700 yards from where his body lay. It is heart-rending that such a case should be settled by a doctor and a policeman without a fiscal ever showing his face for investigation;"

and, whether he will order an inquiry to be made into the facts of the case?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention had not been called to this matter until I saw the hon. Member's Question. Inquiry is being made, but I have not yet received a Report. As the hon. Member is aware, the locality is somewhat distant.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS —THE HORSE TAX.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether officers' horses running in military races or steeplechases will be liable to the proposed duty of £5?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; the Race Horse Duty will not be payable for a horse competing in a race expressly confined to horses kept by officers of Her Majesty's Regular Forces in conformity with the Regulations of the Service, who are stationed in any particular camp or garrison.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POST OFFICE OF ROUNDSTONE (GALWAY).

MR. FOLEY (Galway, Connemara) asked the Postmaster General, When it is intended to fill up the vacancy to the office of Postmaster at present existing at the Post Office of Roundstone (Galway), to relieve the inhabitants of the district from the great inconvenience of having to travel a distance of 10 miles to the neighbouring district of Clifden to obtain Post Office Orders or get them changed?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The vacancy has just been filled. The delay was caused by the difficulty of finding securities to the bond which it is usual to have executed in such cases.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTS.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why it is that, in spite of the assurance given by the Lord Chancellor, and communicated to the House on the 12th of March, no Court will be held at Stowmarket during the month of May; and, whether the inquiry into the arrangements relating to the holding of County Courts in Suffolk has yet been brought to a conclusion; and, if so, with what result?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The assurance communicated to the House on the 12th of March was to the effect that the provisions of the Act would be strictly observed. The law is that monthly Courts shall be held, unless the Lord Chancellor directs otherwise. I am now informed that there is a special direction that Courts shall be held bi-monthly at Stowmarket, and the Judge is acting in accordance with those directions. The Lord Chancellor is still in communication with the Judge on the subject of satisfactorily disposing of the business in Suffolk.

ARMY (INDIA) RETIRED INDIAN OFFICERS — PAYMENT OF PENSIONS.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAM (Portsmouth) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, considering the inconvenience experienced by some retired Officers of the Indian Army in only receiving their pensions quarterly in arrears, it could be arranged to pay those pensions monthly instead of quarterly in future?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The late Secretary of State in Council went very fully into this question in March, 1886, and decided that there was no sufficient reason for incurring the additional expense which would be caused by the alteration of the existing practice.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL AND HORSE TAXES.

MR. BOND (Dorset, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether farmers who have covenanted in their leases to perform a certain amount of cartage, in lieu of rent, for their landlords, will be liable for the Wheel and Horse Taxes in carrying out their agreements?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In answer to this Question I can only repeat, as I said yesterday in reply to two similar inquiries, that it is quite impossible to provide in a general Bill to meet all contingencies and hypothetical cases, and it must be left to those who administer the new duty to do so fairly and without undue severity.

PRISON REGULATIONS (IRELAND)—MR. JOHN ROCHE.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) (for Mr. SHEEHY) (Galway, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, according to Prison Rules, prisoners should be exercised twice daily for an hour each time; whether Mr. John Roche, a prisoner now in Galway Gaol, is obliged to take his two hours daily exercise altogether; and, whether the only excuse for this treatment is that the prison is short handed for warders?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The General Prisons Board inform me there is nothing in the Prison Rules requiring that prisoners shall be exercised twice daily. The requirement is that prisoners shall each receive two hours' exercise in the day; but whether in one period or otherwise is left to the discretion of the Governor. The Governor of Galway Prison reports it is not the case that the prisoner in question (John Roche) is obliged to take his two hours' daily exercise in one period. He has, on the contrary, received it daily (with the exception of the two days immediately following his admission to prison on the 4th of April) in two periods, morning and afternoon.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he proposes to include in the vehicles liable to the payment of a Wheel Tax those used exclusively for the protection of life and property from fire?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Such vehicles will not under my proposals be liable to taxation.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCELS POST—PACKAGES FROM SOUTH AFRICA, &c.—DISTRIBUTION.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that Parcel Post packages from South Africa, the British West Indies, and South America, though landed at Plymouth, are forwarded to London for distribution; whether Indian and Australian parcels, though sealed by the Custom House Authorities at Plymouth, are forwarded to London by the same steamer; whether, if these parcels were distributed from Plymouth, they would be delivered 24 to 48 hours earlier over the greater part of England; whether foreign parcels landed at Liverpool are distributed from there; and, if there is any good reason why the same system should not be pursued at Plymouth?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I need not assure the noble Viscount that I am glad to do all that I reasonably can to render the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post as popular and efficient as possible. But while there would, no doubt, be a certain gain of time in assorting some of the sea-borne parcels at Plymouth, the question is largely one of expense, which I have not hitherto seen my way to incur. The Indian and Australian steamers call at Plymouth on the homeward voyage only. Hence, as regards these lines, an establishment in duplicate would be required—one in London for the outward parcels, and one at Plymouth for the homeward parcels. There are other substantial objections to a change of practice at Plymouth, even as regards mails from the Cape and elsewhere. These do not prevail at Liverpool, where certain Colonial parcel mails are wholly dealt with. But I will examine the whole question further, and come to a decision at an early date.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — THE IRISH TENANTRY.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the language attributed to him in the following report of his banquet speech on the 11th instant is correct:—

> "Practically, the tenants of Ireland at this moment, not the whole tenantry of Ireland, were deliberately engaged upon the task of abstaining from fulfilling their just obligations, which it was absolutely in their power to fulfil;"

if he can state how many conspiracies of this kind have been dealt with under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and, whether the Government have ample power under the latter Act for grappling with such conspiracies; and, if so, whether the law is being vigorously enforced?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I hope the extract is not verbally correct, as the English in which it is couched seems to me very indifferent. But I certainly stated that a large number of Irish tenants conspired to repudiate obligations which they were not only legally bound to fulfil, but which they had it in their power to fulfil. In so far as it rests with the Government, and not with the landlords, to deal with this repudiation of just liabilities, we shall, of course, do our best to enforce the law. The powers conferred by the Crimes Act have proved—and in the future may be expected to prove—of great utility; there have been successful prosecutions for inciting to the Plan of Campaign, and we may hope that there may be successful prosecutions for engaging in it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I have to say, with regard to the extract which appears in the Question, that it was taken from *The Times.*

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MURDER OF JAMES FITZMAURICE, AT LIXNAW, CO. KERRY—NORAH FITZMAURICE.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the published letter of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), stating that it was necessary to take steps to protect Norah Fitzmaurice "from the hostility of the National League;" and, is it the case that this woman lives in Kerry, where the National League was suppressed over six months ago?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, before the right hon. Gentleman answered that Question, he wished to ask him whether he had seen a notice in that day's papers announcing that the two men who were condemned for the murder of Fitzmaurice, when being conveyed from the gaol at Wicklow to Tralee, had been received at the platform at the latter place by a crowd who cheered them?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E): I have not seen the report alluded to by my hon. Friend (Mr. T. W. Russell); but I am afraid there is a sympathy with crime in parts of Ireland which makes the report he has just read to the House not improbable. With regard to the Question upon the Paper, I have not seen the particular letter referred to; but I am aware that the vindictive spirit, engendered by the National League in Kerry before its suppression, has not entirely died out of the county, and that the fact that Norah Fitzmaurice gave evidence against the murderers of her father has exposed her to much malevolent persecution.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware how long the vindictive spirit engendered by the suppression of the National League was likely to last before it was a thing of the past?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; but it largely depends upon the presence of the friends of the hon. and learned Gentleman.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX.

MR. MACLURE (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as in all cases in Great Britain where tramways are laid for the conveyance of passengers, &c., the Company is not only compelled to lay with granite setts but also to maintain them and the entire roadway both between the rails and also a considerable space on either side thereof, he will consider whether such undertakings may fairly be exempted from the Wheel Duty, as they not only almost entirely maintain the road, but, in addition, are heavy contributors to the local rates?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; tramways will not be liable to the proposed Wheel Tax. They already pay Carriage Duty on the carriages they employ.

PATENT LAWS AMENDMENT.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to Memorials referring to recent decisions of the Court of Appeal in cases of Patent Law, presented to the Board of Trade by the Bolton Chamber of Commerce, by the Oldham Chamber of Commerce, and by Crosses and Winkworth, Limited; and, whether he can state if it is the intention of the Government shortly to take action to amend existing Patent Laws, in such manner as to protect innocent purchasers and users of patented articles and apparatus, who have acted in good faith, from vexatious and costly litigation, and to confer upon parties to actions for infringement of patents the right of trial by Judge and jury in the ordinary manner?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been drawn to the Memorials referred to by the hon. Member. It is the intention of the Government shortly to introduce a Bill amending in some minor particulars the Patents Act of 1883, and I will consult the highest legal authorities as to the desirability of dealing with the question raised in the Memorials.

HASTINGS AND TORQUAY LOCAL ACTS —INSERTION OF CLAUSES BY THE POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS COMMITTEE.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a letter from Mr. Arthur Arnold, which appeared in *The Pall Mall Gazette* on the 11th instant, with reference to the insertion in the Hastings and Torquay Local Acts, by the Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee, of which Mr. Arnold was a member, of the clauses under which several persons have been committed to prison; whether it is correct that the Home Department objected to the insertion of these clauses; and, whether he will take steps to ensure that any alteration of the existing law affecting the liberty of the subject, proposed to be inserted in Private Bills, shall be brought under the consideration of the House before such Bills are passed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen the letter referred to. It is true that the Home Office objected to the clause. As I have already stated in this House, by Standing Order 173a Committees of this House are required to bring clauses of this kind to the notice of the House by specially reporting on them. This Torquay Bill was reported on May 25, 1886, when the House had an opportunity of considering it. I will consult with the Authorities of the House as to whether any amendment of this Order is desirable, with the view of obtaining a more effectual fulfilment of its intention.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that this Committee was originally appointed under the Government of his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) for the purpose of preventing those excessive powers from being inserted in the Acts; and that subsequently, on the Motion of Mr. Sclater-Booth (now Lord Basing), a Standing Order was introduced to compel the Home Office to report on the Bills? Would the Home Office bring this matter before the House, and prevent such a ridiculous measure passing into law? What course did the right hon. Gentleman intend to pursue?

Mr. MATTHEWS replied that the Home Office had objected on the ground that special legislation of this kind should not be introduced for a particular locality, and that if the thing was desirable at all it should be done by general legislation. The Home Office objected to the clause altogether; but the Bill was reported to the House by the Committee with a Reference to the objection of the Home Office. He should be willing to assist the House in forming a judgment, but he could not see what the Home Office could have done.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER asked, whether the Home Office, when it found out that the Committee was inserting a clause which it believed to be wrong, would take care that the House should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the matter?

Mr. MATTHEWS presumed that a change could only be effected by a change of Standing Order. The Home Office considered it to be its duty to state its view to the Committee, but the objection had been overruled.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—CONTRACTS—THE MORNING MAIL TO THE NORTH.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the London morning mail to the North is detained three hours at Perth and one hour at Inverness, only arriving at its destination one hour before the evening mail; and, whether he will arrange in the new contract to prevent these unnecessary delays?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The departure from Perth of the mail in question is not dependent merely upon the London mail, but also upon the evening mails from Edinburgh and Glasgow, which could not reach Perth earlier without a curtailment of the hours of posting in both cities. The interval of about an hour occurring at Inverness is understood to be in the interest of passengers that they may obtain breakfast. In any negotiations with the Highland Railway Company for a new contract, I shall be glad to see if an acceleration of the mail in question is feasible; but I cannot pledge myself to any course which would add to the large expense already incurred in serving the districts affected.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE AND WHEEL TAX.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will consider the possibility of exemption from the Horse and Wheel Tax of officers of Constabulary obliged to keep horses and vehicles for the purpose of discharging the duties of their offices?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am informed that such exemptions have been in practice allowed in the administration of duties similar to the proposed Horse and Wheel Tax, though they were never granted by Statute. I propose to follow precedent in the present instance.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked whether the Rule would apply to all persons in Government employ, such as those who horsed the post and parcel vans?

Mr. GOSCHEN asked for Notice of the Question.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COST OF ELECTIONS.

Mr. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the cost of elections, both in districts and County Councils, will have to be borne by candidates, or will be paid out of the rates?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): All costs properly incurred by the Returning Officers in relation to the holding of elections of Elective Councillors for County Councils and District Councils will be paid out of the county and district funds.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—HOURS OF CIVILIAN TELEGRAPHISTS.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he contemplates making the civilian telegraphists' hours 48 hours a-week, the same as the female and Royal Engineers' staffs, and to pay for all duty performed on Sundays?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I do not propose to reduce the ordinary attendance of civilian male telegraphists from 50 to 48 hours a-week, or to pay them extra for work done on Sunday. Their present pay was fixed so as to include remuneration for 50 hours' work a-week—namely, 48 on week-days and two on Sundays.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MURDER OF JAMES FITZMAURICE AT LIXNAW, CO. KERRY—REPORTED STATEMENT OF THE HON. MR. JUSTICE O'BRIEN AT THE WICKLOW ASSIZES.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If he has seen the reported statement of the Hon. Mr. Justice O'Brien at the Wicklow Assizes in *The Irish Times* of 12th April, that his Lordship had before him "a printed statement made apparently on oath by the prisoner" (a man named Buckley, on trial for his life, on a charge for which two persons have already been sentenced to death); can he say if this was a statement made under the Inquisition Clause of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and, how came it to be furnished to the Court, and by whom?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): This Question only appeared upon the Paper this morning, and I have not been able to obtain the necessary information.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But the man is on trial for his life, and surely the hon. and learned Gentleman could have obtained the information?

MR. MADDEN: The Question relates to a matter of fact, and I at once asked for the information, but up to the present time I have not received it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The Colleague of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General is in Wicklow, and he could have sent the information on a 6*d.* telegram?

MR. MADDEN: The telegram of inquiry was sent on, but not in time to receive an answer.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will have a census taken of the number of vehicles in the Metropolitan area taxable under the Budget Resolution?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I cannot give an absolute pledge on the subject. I should propose that no person should pay for more vans than the number of horses which he keeps. I shall endeavour to ascertain the number of horses now kept for trade purposes in the Metropolis. I will lay Papers on the Table of the House showing the number of trade horses which existed and paid duty formerly, so far as to enable the hon. Gentleman and his Friends to form some conclusion on the matter.

MR. CAUSTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman going back to 14 years ago? I anticipated that he might have referred to the source whence his information as to the number of horses would be derived?

MR. GOSCHEN: There are several sources whence the information might be derived. If the hon. Member will look to the progress generally during the last 14 years he will be able to form an estimate of the number of trade horses to-day, precisely in the same manner as an estimate is formed of the increase of population.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the case of carts and waggons with removable covers, it is intended that the weight for purposes of the Cart and Wheel Tax shall be taken with or without the covers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): This is a Question which must be dealt with administratively; but I can say that tarpaulin and unfixed covers will not be reckoned in the weight of carts and waggons. I may say, however, that similar conundrums to this and other Questions might be asked of me with regard to every tax. In every form of taxation there are a certain number of anomalies which must be dealt with by sensible administration.

INDIA—CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has yet received any reply to his communications addressed to the Government of India with respect to the Contagious Diseases Acts in that country?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State has been informed that the question of the Contagious Diseases Acts is being inquired into separately in the Home Department of the Government of India. A Report is expected, but has not yet arrived. If it should not arrive by the next mail, the Secretary of State will cause a telegraphic communication to be made to the Government of India.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — CO. CLARE—MR. HICKSON, Q.C., TEMPORARY COUNTY COURT JUDGE.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Is it true, notwithstanding the understanding that the appeal of the hon. Member for Clare (Mr. Cox) from a sentence of three months' imprisonment by the Resident Magistrate for a speech last October, would be tried before the Clare County Court Judge in the statutory way, Mr. William Hickson, Q.C., a member of the Constitutional Club, and a constant attendant at its meetings, has been specially appointed by the Viceroy, and, though only holding the appointment temporarily and at pleasure, will have the decision in this case; and, can an assurance be given that, if any legal vacancy in the gift of the present Executive occurs, no application from this temporary Judge will be entertained?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): If the hon. Member will refer to the answer given to his former Question on the 12th of March, and reported in *Hansard*, he will see that there is absolutely nothing to suggest any such understanding as the hon. Member now assumes to exist. Mr. Hickson has been appointed as deputy, not by the Viceroy, but by the Lord Chancellor, in pursuance of the statute under which he is bound to make provision for the discharge of the duties of a County Court Judge who is temporarily disabled from performing them. In answer to the second paragraph of the Question, I have to say that no such assurance can be given as that which the hon. Member desires.

Mr. DILLON: Then are we to understand that this gentleman will get, as a bribe or reward for the sentence he will inflict on my hon. Friend, an appointment immediately after the sentence?

[No reply.]

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT, CLAUSE 27—THE TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1884.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, whether Scottish Trustees can take advantage of Clause 27 of the National Debt Conversion Act, and legally invest the proceeds arising from the sale under that clause of Stock held by them in securities authorized by "The Trusts (Scotland) Act, 1884"?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Clause 27 was added on recommitment, and was not in the original Bill. Without giving any legal opinion, I may say that the clause as it stands does not appear to apply to any Stock held by Trustees in Scotland.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether in any way there was a provision in the Bill, or, if not, whether he would provide in the Bill that Scottish Trustees under Scottish Law should obtain the advantage of Clause 27?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, there was a slip in not including Scotland in the Bill; and he would take care, by one means or another, to have the matter put right. Possibly it might be necessary to add a clause to that effect; but, in any case, he would attend to the matter.

POST OFFICE—THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE—VACANCIES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether there are over 60 vacancies in the first class of telegraphists in the Central Telegraph Office; whether the sum of £41,252, taken at page 131 of the Estimates on account of this class, is about £10,000 in excess of what would be required for the salaries of the existing staff in that class; and, whether it is intended to fill up the vacancies at once, or to reduce the Estimate?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): At the present time there are over 60 vacancies on the first class of telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office, 41 of these vacancies being due to an augmentation of the Establishment since the Estimates were prepared. Promotions have recently been made, and further promotions will be made in due course during the financial year. The expenditure for salaries paid to telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office will, I believe, approximate very closely to the Estimates.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, on the occasion of the second reading of the Employers' Liability Bill, he will make that measure the first Order of the Day? Would the right hon. Gentleman now fix a date when the second reading would be taken?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he should be glad to fix a date for the second reading, but until the Local Government Bill was taken he was in a difficulty with regard to the Business which must follow. The hon. Gentleman was aware that it was the intention of the Government to take this Bill as the important Business on some specified evening; but he was not able to give an undertaking that the measure should appear as the first Order of the Day, because the Government might find it necessary to put down less important measures which would require to be advanced a stage before other Business was taken.

In reply to Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that he regarded the Bill as one of very great importance, and both that Bill and the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill must be taken at a very early date.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—OPPOSED BUSINESS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been directed to the practice under the new Rules of Procedure of the progress of nearly all Bills called on after midnight being peremptorily stopped by any hon. Member saying "I object," without giving any reason for such objection; and, if the Government propose to submit to the House any amendment of such Rule, in order to facilitate useful legislation?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) also asked, whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman had been called to the character of the legislation which was stopped by the 12 o'clock Rule.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must refrain from expressing an opinion on the character of legislation for which the Government are not responsible. It is hardly desirable that I should do so. In answer to my hon. Friend's Question on the Paper, I have to say that the Rule existing before the present Rule was brought into operation enabled any hon. Member to object to a measure being taken after half-past 12, and that objection could be taken by simply putting a Notice on the Paper, without requiring the Member's personal attendance. The House now meets an hour earlier than it used to do for all practical purposes; and, therefore, we have half-an-hour more for the discharge of our duties in this House and for making progress with Business than we had before the present Rule was enacted. In these circumstances—and being of opinion that, on the whole, the new Rule will work for the convenience of the House, and tend rather to promote the progress both of Public Business and Business in which private Members are interested—I do not think it my duty to ask the House to make any alteration in the Rule.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would be able occasionally to stop Government Business at half-past 11, or some other early hour, in order that private Members' Bills might have some chance?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sure that my hon. Friend will see that it would be extremely dangerous to do anything of that kind.

ADMIRALTY—ST. SAVIOUR'S CHURCH, DARTMOUTH.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is true, as reported in the local Press, that the Lords of the Admiralty have forwarded a contribution towards the reconstruction of St. Saviour's Church, Dartmouth; whether it is true that this church is made use of by the chaplain, cadets, and crew of H.M.S. *Britannia* stationed at that port; whether the Lords of the Admiralty will persist in their refusal to contribute towards the lights and buoys of the harbour of Dartmouth which are made use of by Her Majesty's ships; and, whether their Lordships will contribute towards the necessary repairs of Nonconformist places of worship situated in the vicinity of Naval Establishments?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is true that the Board of Admiralty have recently contributed £25 towards the restoration of St. Saviour's Church, Dartmouth. The church is used regularly by some of the non-commissioned officers, petty officers, and men of the *Britannia*, and they are allowed free accommodation. In considering grants towards places of worship, no distinction is made by the Admiralty between the several recognized religious denominations, but the claims in each case are decided on its merits. The question of contributing towards the maintenance of the lights and buoys at Dartmouth has not been previously referred to the Admiralty; but it may be well to say that they have no responsibility for the maintenance of lights and buoys, except such as come within their jurisdiction under the Dockyard Ports Regulation Act.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—PROGRESS OF THE CONVERSION.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) asked, Whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer could give the House any further information as to the actual progress of the Conversion Scheme?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am glad to say that the figures are still more favourable than those which I was able to announce to the House yesterday. The total amount of the assents from Consol holders and holders of Reduced is £307,000,000. The total amount converted, including New Threes, is £473,000,000. Out of £323,000,000, the total amount of Consols, only £68,500,000 remains unconverted. Out of £69,000,000 of Reduced £16,000,000 is unconverted. The total amount not converted out of the total Funded Debt of £558,000,000 is about £85,000,000. My hon. Friend will remember that Trustees are still allowed to hand in their assents up to the 12th of May, the 1st of June, and the 1st of September respectively, according to circumstances.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If early Notice would be given of the day upon which the Criminal Evidence Bill was to be proceeded with, so that Irish Members who wished to get away might not have to return immediately in order to oppose the Bill? He also wished to know if the measure was intended to be referred to the Standing Committee on Legal Bills?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that in the absence of the Attorney General he was not at present able to say when the Bill would be taken. His impression was that it would not be referred to a Standing Committee, as the Bill was of a very simple character. Ample Notice would be given of the day which would be fixed for further discussion of the Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Could we have a week's Notice?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I will answer that Question on Monday.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he intended to proceed with the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am extremely anxious to have the judgment of the House on that Bill, because it relates to matters that are pressing in Ireland; but, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, the Budget and Local Government Bill stand in the way. The better plan will be for the right hon. Gentleman to address a Question to my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury.

MOTIONS.

—o—

ORDERS OF THE DAY (SUPPLY).

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Fridays, be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the Second Reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had not condescended to allege any reason for making that Motion. He (Mr. Labouchere) could easily understand that, because the right hon. Gentleman had not got any to allege. They were still at an early period of the Session, with almost four months before them, and there was really no ground for making that demand upon the House nor any precedent for it. The Business of the Government was, moreover, now in an exceptionally forward state. It might be said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had got to move the Budget Bill, but if that was necessary, surely he might have moved it before the Local Government Bill was taken up. The ordinary usage was that private Members' days were only taken for the second reading of opposed Bills which involved the fate of the Government, and that was not the case at present. In 1882, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) moved his Procedure Rules, he did not take the days of private Members, but took the Rules only on Government days. With the clôture the Government had the time of the House much more in their hands than at any previous period, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if they gave the Government that day, whether he would agree not to move the closure on the Local Government Bill? No; he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman would agree to that. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that two nights were almost too much for the debate on the second reading of that Bill. But when hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side were themselves in Opposition, and the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian brought in a Bill for the Local Government of Ireland, the debate on the second reading took three weeks. There were 5,000,000 inhabitants in Ireland, while there were 28,000,000 in England who would be affected by this Bill. Let them work their own sum as to the number of days that the Conservatives would have demanded, if in Opposition, for the discussion of a Local Government Bill that had been brought in by a Liberal Ministry. Again, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) always arranged the Business of the House in such a manner as that he might put in a claim for taking away the nights of private Members. It was simply like a gentleman who had arranged to pay his debts, and was under the absolute necessity of robbing his neighbour in order to do so. Last Session the Government took almost every day belonging to private Members, and used as an argument to induce Members to vote for the new Rules of Procedure, that they would obviate the necessity of taking so many private Members' night. But no sooner were the Rules passed than the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury came down and took away the privileges of private Members. The mode in which they proposed to take them this Session was as outrageous as the demand itself. Before Easter the right hon. Gentleman incidentally dropped an observation to the effect that he would have the Local Government Bill brought on on Thursday and that a Division would be taken on Friday. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) pointed out yesterday, there was no agreement with the House to that effect; the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had simply given that as his opinion, and had given his own assent to it. On Wednesday last the right hon. Gentleman, in reply to a Question, said that he should certainly take Friday, because the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) had agreed to waive his claim to that day. He (Mr. Labouchere) would point out that the day did not belong to the hon. Member for Stockport; it was the property of private Members generally. There were not many Gentlemen of very independent character—if they would allow him to say so—on the Ministerial side of the House, but the hon. Member for Stockport was one of the three or four Members on that side who had dared to oppose the Government. He should like to know whether the hon. Gentleman was told that he must give up the night, or whether it was of his own free will that he gave it up. He did not think that the hon. Member gave it up freely. He objected to the day being taken on general grounds. The House did not meet to discuss Government measures only. Hon. Members should have some sort of initiative, and should be able to propose reforms and protest against grievances. If Fridays did not belong to private Members they would never have had the present Local Government Bill from a Conservative Government. There were hundreds of grievances which Members were anxious to urge, but what opportunity would they have if Fridays were taken away? There were special reasons for not assenting to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. The Local Government Bill was one of an important character, as it concerned great local bodies. They wanted time to investigate matters and to allow their constituents to examine the Bill thoroughly. The discussion should take place at intervals in order that the country might be able to understand the points raised on each particular day, reflect upon them and communicate their views to their Representatives. On the Opposition side of the House they agreed to the principle of the Bill—that was to say, they agreed that Local Government should be in the hands of the inhabitants of the localities. But they must have a full opportunity of considering whether the details did not vitiate the principle. He did not think hon. Members on that side would arrive at the conclusion that they did, but time should be given so that the Bill might be fully discussed. Simply because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had expressed a general agreement with the principle of the Bill, the First Lord of the Treasury imagined that they were to swallow the Bill as a whole without any discussion. The right hon. Gentleman was very courteous and was eminently respectable, but they must not lose sight of the fact that under this veil of respectability he concealed a great deal of astuteness. The right hon. Gentleman might not be as old a Parliamentary hand as some people, but he knew the Parliamentary game exceedingly well, and he (Mr. Labouchere) and others of the Opposition side of the House had felt it their duty to keep their eyes on him. What the right hon. Gentleman wanted was really a tactical advantage. Undoubtedly it would be a tactical advantage if they were not given time to look into the merits of the Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman, however, wanted this advantage, hon. Members had a right to claim that the Rule should not be altered in order that the Government might secure it. On legitimate Party grounds, and in the interests of the country, he asked that Friday should be retained for private Members, and that the Bill should not be rushed through in an indecent fashion. Private Members on both sides were somewhat inclined to hang together in these matters. He hoped that on the present occasion every private Member on the Government side who owned a private judgment would vote against the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House. The Motion would establish a precedent, and an evil precedent, and if the House agreed to it, private Members would have no rights left, or, at any rate, they would resemble sheep, whose only rights were to bleat and have their throats cut. The crushed worm was sure to turn, but if they did not speedily turn and protest, they would be crushed and pulverized altogether by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport) said, he wished to ask the House to allow him to explain his position. Perhaps no one was more unwilling to waive his right to move the Motion which stood on the Paper in his name relating to the Accountant General's and Secretary's Department of the Admiralty for that evening than he was. He considered it a great hardship that he should be deprived of the opportunity of bringing before the House a question of considerable importance to the taxpayers, and one which they were not likely to hear much of from official sources. It was a double hardship, because the whole of last Session private Members had no opportunity of bringing forward questions in which they and their constituents were interested. A great many Members were elected especially to present to the House particular questions in which the constituencies were concerned. Those questions were very likely of no moment to a great and powerful Government, but they were of great importance to the constituencies which sent the Members to Parliament. In his own case he felt it the more, because he understood that Tuesdays and Fridays were practically to be taken from private Members throughout the rest of the Session. [Mr. W. H. SMITH: No, no!] Private Members were to be remitted to a night Session, when they would come down and be treated to the exciting entertainment of seeing the House counted out. This arrangement was very disadvantageous to the Government and to the Party to which he himself belonged. The Motion which he had on the Paper concerned great abuses of the Public Service, and he thought he could show that these abuses were very serious, involving the expenditure of large sums of money under a system which was still in existence. That the House should be deprived of the opportunity of discussing such a matter was a great wrong. When the question of giving up his right to the day was put to him, he understood that he had no choice. If he had any, he should have declined to give way; but the matter was put to him in a way which led him to suppose that it was a case of Hobson's choice, and that whether he agreed or not, the night would be taken just the same. Under these circumstances he declined to take any credit for having given up the night, and he should vote for the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, that his sympathies went with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings). Hon. Members who wished to bring subjects before the House had been deprived of opportunities of doing so for many Sessions past. What was the hurry in pushing forward the Local Government Bill? He presumed that there were very few Members who would vote against the second reading. In the great principle of the Bill most of them were agreed, but the local governing bodies of the country ought to have the opportunity of thoroughly understanding the details of the Bill. There were two or three speeches delivered on Thursday night that deserved to be considered in the Provinces by those who as yet had not had the opportunity of reading them; and he desired on their behalf that they should have the opportunity of learning from the discussions on the second reading what the clauses of the Bill really meant. This would be most easily secured by giving private Members their usual nights during the ensuing week.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) said, he had on the Paper a Motion for that evening relating to the constitution of the Boards of Customs and Inland Revenue. He opposed the Motion as interfering unduly with the rights of private Members, and hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not go to a Division.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, he feared the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had clôture on the brain. He (Mr. H. Gardner) agreed upon the necessity of the country being afforded time to thoroughly digest the arguments and criticisms which would be made on the scheme of Local Government. The Bill had been described as a revolution; he was certain the House did not wish it turned into a *coup d'état.* If the Government would promise that in return a proper number of Government nights would be given for the discussion of the measures of private Members, he should not oppose the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury on the present occasion.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) said, he should cordially support his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in opposing the Motion, on the ground that he desired to retain some remnant of private Members' rights which year by year were being gradually and steadily taken away. The condition of Public Business was so far advanced that the Government could not possibly claim urgency for the Local Government Bill, but they, having obtained their closure, seemed to desire to use it most unscrupulously and in a manner opposed to the interests of the House as well as to the interests of the country.

Mr. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) said, he desired to support the general protest against taking the nights of private Members, but he did not altogether support the proposed application of it, for he must say he thought Northampton had a good deal of the time of private Members this Session. What was the position? Only two months of the Session had passed, and for those two months the Government had had it all their own way, and had practically monopolized all the time of the House. If they desired to "beat the record," he submitted that they had already done so, for they had got very far forward with a most important Bill, while they had revolutionized the National Debt and brought in a most portentous Budget. He suggested that the House wanted time to consider the provisions of the Local Government Bill. They had not all got the great intellects of the Gentlemen who sat on the two Front Benches, and they required time for consideration. What good would result from such a headlong and indecent rushing of the measure through the House? At the end of the Session the Government would be in the position of Alexander the Great, when he sat down and wept because there were no other worlds for him to conquer. He had a Motion down for Tuesday; it was nothing whatever to do with the general question of the infraction of Members' rights, but the Motion was one in which he believed a great many hon. Members took a great interest, and he knew if he did not get a chance of bringing it on next Tuesday, the House would very soon get into Committee on the Local Government Bill, and then his chance would be very small indeed.

Mr. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, that the feeling in opposition to the Motion on his side of the House was general. The right hon. Gentleman had no cause to complain of the manner in which the Local Government Bill had been received, and he personally should be very sorry to do anything to wreck a Bill the leading features of which were of so much value and importance. If they parted with the Bill now, before having an exhaustive discussion, they would in Committee be compelled to proceed from clause to clause without knowing really the bearing of one part of the Bill upon another. The House wanted to understand the Bill, and the present stage was the only opportunity they had for general discussion, and for clearing up certain points upon which they desired information. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) that an exhaustive discussion at the present time would greatly facilitate the passing of the Bill. The House had heard very little in the way of a financial statement, and it was extremely difficult to ascertain how the question between boroughs and counties would be affected. If the Government forced the House into Committee, the certain effect would be that in discussing one clause they should be obliged to do so without any reference to concessions that might be made upon another. All the Government nights next week might well be occupied by the discussion on the second reading, and if the private Members' night could be added, so much the better.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that he could not but express great regret that he should appear to be in conflict with any considerable number of Members of the House. Before the holidays, when he first made the proposal contained in his Resolution, he was quite under the impression that it was generally accepted by the House. He wished the House to understand that he never intended or desired to cut short the discussion on the second reading of the Bill, but rather to accommodate himself to the reasonable demands and general wishes of both sides. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken said that full opportunity ought to be given for discussing the second reading of the Bill. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) desired to afford that opportunity, and the Motion he had put on the Paper was the very method by which that end might be attained. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He was exceedingly sorry that any hon. Gentlemen, whether supporters or opponents of the Government, should feel that an undue amount of pressure was being put upon them in the request preferred to him. He could assure the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jennings) that he would have ample opportunities of raising the important question contained in his Motion in Committee upon Vote 13 in the Navy Estimates.

Mr. JENNINGS said, that the subject of his Motion went back over 20 years, and it would not be possible for him to refer largely to previous years in Committee on the Estimates.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he believed the hon. Gentleman would find the opportunity he desired. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) was, however, in the hands of the House. He desired to consult the feelings of the House, so as to forward the Business of the country. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had spoken of himself as a "crushed worm." He deeply regretted that his conduct should have produced that sensation in the hon. Member; but the result of the Session so far showed that there was no want of vitality or critical power in the hon. Gentleman. In the course of his speech, the hon. Member said the second reading of the Bill relating to Ireland occupied three weeks, and having regard to the fact that that Bill affected only 5,000,000 of inhabitants, and that the present Bill referred to 28,000,000, it would be reasonable that the time allotted for the second reading of this Bill——

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he did not say it would be reasonable. He said that the Conservatives took that time when they were in Opposition.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that if the hon. Member's suggestions were carried into effect, it would result in the appropriation of 17 Parliamentary weeks for the second reading of the Bill; and in that case it was obvious that it would be impossible to pass the Bill this Session. When regard was had to the fact that the Bill contained a number of clauses, many of which were almost a Bill in themselves, he thought hon. Gentlemen opposite and those below the Gangway on the Ministerial side would recognize the fact that, although Public Business was in a forward state as compared with last Session, yet the magnitude of the work which the Government had in hand was such that they would not be doing their duty if they failed to avail themselves of every opportunity of pressing forward a measure the principal discussion of which must take place in Committee. The Government were anxious to obtain an opinion on the Budget Bill without delay, and to take the Employers' Liability Bill and the Railway Rates Bill on Government nights; and, under those circumstances, it did appear to him that, although it might be necessary to trench for a little upon the time of private Members, yet the House would do well to give them the time asked for by the Government. Reference had been made to the number of times that private Members' days had been taken during the present Session; but, in his opinion, there had been less interference in that respect than in many past Sessions. This was the first occasion upon which private Members had been asked to surrender their rights. [*Cries of* "Procedure!"] Oh, yes; he believed that two or three nights were taken on the Rules of Procedure. However, he trusted that the House would consent to the Motion that he had made.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he was sorry to hear the closing remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, because he thought they were not quite warranted in point of fact, and marred the effect of the conciliatory spirit of the preceding portion of his speech. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to assume that there was no way of interfering with the rights of private Members except the appropriation of entire Sittings. There was another mode of abridging very greatly the time that private Members had at their disposal—namely, by means of Morning Sittings. As a matter of fact, upon strong and special grounds while Procedure was before the House the rights of private Members were taken away altogether, and even the proposals of private Members on Procedure were entirely excluded from the benefit of that arrangement, and the discussion was limited to the proposals brought forward by Her Majesty's Government. He did not say whether that was right or wrong; but that course was followed with respect to Procedure, and also through the whole of the very important question—and, he rejoiced to think, the very successful measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—with respect to the conversion of the Debt. The whole of that measure was virtually put through its stages at Morning Sittings of the House. However, he did not wish to discuss that matter further than to say that he thought that the arrangement of the Business of the House with regard to its division between the Government and private Members was a matter which had reached a point—after the experience of last year and the initial experience of this—which made it very necessary that it should in a very short time be made the subject of general consideration. He was not prepared to say that they ought to exclude from view some limited further interference at the present moment with the rights of private Members, and he sympathized very much with those Members who were deprived of their opportunities. The course which he should feel it to be his duty to take would depend upon the intention of the Government as to the second reading of the Bill. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman opposite in any degree for the limited space he was disposed to assign in the first instance to the second reading of the Bill, because, if he had been in any degree drawn into a snare in respect of the feelings and impressions of the House, he (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) might himself—in his anxiety to expedite the practical discussion of the measure—have contributed in producing upon the right hon. Gentleman's mind an impression that was not adequate to the occasion. While he (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) thought it was of the utmost importance to have an affirmation of the general principle of the Bill, yet manifestly they had learned that an enormous amount of interest and very considerable difficulty arose in respect of the adjustment of the measure. It was not possible for them to regard the great number of subjects and their diversity and complexity without seeing that Members of the House who had constituents to represent felt it to be necessary for them to have a larger discussion on the second reading of the Bill, and it was impossible in equity to resist that claim. Take, for example, the question of whether the parish was to be regarded as the unit, and whether the structure which they were about to erect was to be built from the parish or was to include the parish—that was a question of the utmost importance. It was a question of the utmost importance to the class which of all classes affected by the Bill was most in need of time and assistance in the consideration of the question—he meant the agricultural labourers. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to renounce any attempt to impose an arbitrary limit upon the discussion of the Bill on the second reading, for it was impossible to exclude from view the necessity of informing the country of the scope of the measure through the medium of their debates and through a *boná fide* discussion in the House. He was sure it was not intended to prolong the discussion beyond the necessary consideration of the merits of the Bill, and the discussion would have no Party aspect. Under those circumstances he was not prepared, though reluctantly, to join in refusing the Government the use of the time of the House to-night for the discussion of the Bill, provided they knew that anything that had been said before on the subject had been said without full information as to the desire of the House, in the interests of the country, for a full discussion on the second reading, and he hoped there would be no further misapprehension on the point.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he could only say, with respect to the period to which the debate should extend, that he should endeavour to take the course that was usual in matters of that kind—that was, to arrive at some reasonable understanding as to the period at which the debate should close.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 243 ; Noes 143 : Majority 100.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[Bill 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

[*Second Night.*]

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) said, that when the clock struck 12 yesterday he was endeavouring to show the House what would be the position of the different local Governing Bodies under the enacting clauses of the Bill, which produced hardly any simplification of areas, rates, or administration, and, indeed, would seem in some cases likely, without Amendments to the Bill, to add to the confusion already existing; and he intended to show later that it was extremely unlikely that the permissive clauses would be acted upon. He pointed out that, in a large populous Union in the North, 14 out of 17 Governing Bodies were left, several of them too small to undertake the general work of Local Government; that in the counties of cities no appreciable simplification was made. Now, let them see in what position the inhabitants of an ordinary urban or rural district in England found themselves. On reference to Mr. Wright's book on Local Government and Taxation, which he conceived was the standard work on these subjects, he found that the inhabitants of an ordinary municipal borough lived in four areas — the borough, the parish, the Union, and the county. The only change under the Bill would be that in some cases the borough would be called an urban district. The inhabitant of an ordinary municipal borough now lived under six authorities—the Council, the School Board, the Vestry, the Guardians, the Quarter Sessions, and the Burial Board. Well, the Bill abolished the Burial Board; but it cut the business of Quarter Sessions in two, giving part of the work to the County Council, and leaving part to the Quarter Sessions. He paid four rates—the borough or general district rate, the poor rate, the county rate, and the burial rate. Well, there did not seem to be any change there. The inhabitant of a Local Board district also lived in four areas—the Local Board, the parish, the Union, and the county. The first would be called an urban district, and that was the only change. That inhabitant lived under six authorities—the Local Board, which would now become the District Council, the Burial Board, the Vestry, the Guardians, the School Board—where there was one—and the Quarter Sessions. The Burial Board disappeared, and the County Council was created. He paid the three rates—the general district rate, the poor rate, and the county rate, which all remained. The inhabitant of a rural parish also lived in four areas—the parish, the Union, the highway district, and the county. A local district was created in which the highway district was merged. He lived under six authorities—the Vestry, the Burial Board, the Guardians, the School Board, the Highway Board, and the Quarter Sessions. An entirely new Board was created to deal with the sanitary work, hitherto done by the Guardians, and with which the Highway Board and Burial Board were amalgamated; while the business of the Quarter Sessions was cut in two, like that of the Guardians, and a new Board created to carry it out. He would still pay four rates—the poor rate, the special poor rate, the county rate, and the highway rate—as before. They would thus see that while a certain number of the smaller functions of Local Government were to be given over to the new Rural District Council, the three greatest and most important branches of local administration and taxation—that of the Poor Law, of Sanitary Work, and of Education—were now to be entrusted to three Bodies instead of two. That was certainly not consolidation or simplification, and the consequence of it would be that it would continue as difficult as ever for a ratepayer to know by whom he was being taxed or rated, or to take an intelligent interest, or exercise any independent control over those most important provinces of local administration affecting the health, the property, and the character of the people in his district. He was perfectly aware that, under Clause 59, the County Council was empowered to frame schemes for simplification and consolidation of districts. But he would venture to point out that if a Government in so splendid a position as the present Government did not venture to tackle this task, was it likely that a County Council, upon whom they laid no obligation to undertake the work, and who had no special motive to undertake it, and who could offer to those Local Authorities no reduction of rate or other inducement to reconcile them to it, and had no large funds of their own, out of which to provide the necessary compensations for vested interests, was it likely that if they passed the present opportunity, and parted with the present power of simplification, it would ever be accomplished until the burdens of local taxation had become absolutely unbearable? And were they in such a position, industrial or otherwise, to risk such increasing drains upon their resources? He was afraid that if the chance was missed, nothing short of the impending bankruptcy of their Local Bodies would force the County Councils to put their hands into the hot water which appeared to frighten even Her Majesty's Government. The object of Local Government Reformers in demanding a simplified system in their Local Government and Taxation was not to obtain ideal uniformity and symmetry, but to guard against what he would show was a most terrible danger to the prosperity and character of this country—namely, the growth and increase of expenditure and debt, and the corruption and demoralization which ensued from profuse and wasteful expenditure. Not only did the complication make impossible intelligent interest and control in these matters, but it also made it almost impossible to apply an efficient check on expenditure. All who had studied these matters knew that democratically-constituted Bodies were very energetic, but were apt to be very extravagant, and the danger of extravagance in local matters was most serious. Their Municipal Bodies had not always or generally been most prudent. They had done a great deal of good work, and had a good deal that was valuable to show for their expenditure; but that expenditure had often been dangerously extravagant; and now that the prosperity of the country was no longer advancing by leaps and bounds they were beginning to feel the effects of it. Certain towns, no doubt, had much good work to show for their outlay—such as Birmingham. But Birmingham was remarkable for the amount of civic virtue that it contained, and it had also had the advantage of the leadership and direction of a most distinguished administrator. America had long possessed democratic Local Bodies. The people there were of our own race, with the same instincts of popular government, and this country might therefore gain some useful lessons from their experience, which had been gained at a cost which would be ruinous to an old country like ours. The Federal Government had had to come to their relief, and their debts had sometimes been reduced by repudiation. But even at the present time in nine cities of one of the older States the interest on the local debt was about equal to the whole expenditure for all other purposes whatever, while the debt was equal to one sixth of the entire capital value of the assessed capital freehold value of the property, real and personal, of their inhabitants. They must remember that in speaking of America taxation was levied on the capital or freehold value of property, and not on its income. In two of these cities the debt was equal in one case to a little less, and in the other to a little more, than one-half of the whole assessed capital value of the whole property, real and personal, which was liable to taxation within them. Circumstances called his attention some 40 years ago to the management of the town of New York. The rating was at that time ⅝ per cent upon capital, a pretty handsome rate as they would consider. It was now 2¼ per cent upon the total capital value of the assessed property of New York, which included personal as well as real property. Such a rate of taxation in England would absorb the whole net average income which a landlord derived from landed property, as he believed in England landed property did not now pay more than 2¼ per cent net on its value. It was as a consequence of that experience that 10 of the principal States of America had put an absolute limit on the borrowing and taxing powers of their Local Authorities. And that limit had been found to work admirably. It was not only a check to borrowing and waste, but it had made the administration of the cities at the same time purer and more efficient than it was before. And in Chicago, a city of Illinois, one of the States in which the check had been longest in existence, it had stood the tremendous strain of the burning of the city, and he saw in the last report of that city that while they alluded to the difficulty of carrying out as rapidly as they could wish all the improvements that were urged upon them, they spoke most highly of the beneficial effect of this limitation. But to show the necessity of such a check they need not go beyond their own boundaries. They found that in 18 years, while the rateable value of England and Wales had increased 47 per cent, the local expenditure had doubled, and the loans outstanding at the end of the financial year had increased from £33,000,000 to £147,000,000. But the most dangerous feature was, that that system of borrowing, far from being checked with the less rapid increase in the prosperity and wealth of the country, was still advancing by "leaps and bounds." The increase of local indebtedness in 1886 was £8,200,000; and while America was not only putting these stringent limitations on debt, but also limiting to something like one-half or one-third the period of time allowed for repayment here, we, who had not her enormous undeveloped resources to depend upon, seemed to be taking no such precautions. The Government had, in principle, admitted the necessity of placing an absolute check upon the borrowing by Local Authorities, for they had put an absolute limit on the power of the County Council to borrow. The limit they had placed was that of two years' rateable value of the counties, and when that was reached the Local Government Board was not to sanction any further loans. But the aggregate rateable value of the counties was upwards of £130,000,000, while the County Debt at present was only £3,500,000, the heaviest debt of any single county amounting to only one-thirteenth of its rateable value. Most of the gaols and lunatic asylums, for which in the main these debts had been incurred, had now been built; yet the limit of two years' rateable value would not be reached until the counties had borrowed to the extent of £260,000,000 collectively, assuming that the counties had all borrowed in equal proportions, or till the county which had borrowed most had borrowed 26 times the amount of its present indebtedness. But, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman had placed no absolute limit on the borrowing powers of the District Councils, to whom he was about to entrust the whole of the sanitary administration and expenditure. It was this department of Local Administration which had been the source of the greater part of the enormous expenditure of the urban districts. No doubt the reason why they had not applied that limit to the borrowing powers of the Local Councils and Municipal Bodies was because in the Bill, as it now stood, it was extremely difficult to see how it could be applied while they had so many overlapping and confused Local Authorities and areas.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To what check does the hon. Member refer?

MR. RATHBONE: To the check of not allowing County Councils to borrow above a certain proportion of their rateable value.

MR. RITCHIE: The same check applies to District Councils. No District Council will be able, under any circumstances, to borrow more money than two years' rateable value, and then only with the sanction of the Local Government Board.

MR. RATHBONE: He was not in the habit of making assertions in that House, requiring legal knowledge, without taking the best advice he could get upon the subject, and he had not made the statement without obtaining the best legal advice as to whether he was correct in the matter; but, of course, he did not put his opinion against that of the right hon. Gentleman. The limit on debt in America was rightly placed upon debt, exclusive of that borrowed for water and gas, as those undertakings ought to be, if well-managed, profitable investments. He found there were only five boroughs here whose debts, exclusive of that for gas and water, exceeded the amount of two years' rateable value, none that had exceeded two and a-half years, and only one slightly over two and a-quarter. The great bulk of the borough debts, exclusive of gas and water, were between one and two years' rateable value, so that the limit of two years' rateable value placed by the Bill on the county borrowing, if placed upon local borrowing, would be about right. In the statements given him the sanitary and municipal debts were both included, and also the school board debts in boroughs which had separate school boards. But he had alluded to another most important point in which the Bill failed to carry out the provisions for the adjustment of taxation, which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had urged as just and necessary, and which were as important for their effects upon administration and economy as they were necessary in justice to the ratepayers—he meant the division of rates between owners and occupiers. The right hon. Gentleman stated, in 1871, that the Government had become more and more convinced that both justice and public policy required that the owner should pay a certain portion of the taxes. He asserted that it was inexpedient that landlords should be allowed to contract with their tenants that the Local Authority should impose no taxation upon them; that such a practice was not permitted with regard to Imperial taxation; and he proposed to enact that engagements by which owners contracted themselves out of the payment of local taxation should be void. He pointed out that that division of rates existed in Scotland and Ireland, and that in England alone were the tenants made exclusively liable for the payment of local taxation. The right hon. Gentleman further showed that it was most important, for the interests of the public and the good administration of affairs, that not only the occupiers, but the owners, should take a direct and practical interest in the expenditure of the rates, and that his own experience in Local Government led him most heartily to agree with. Two Committees, one of the Liberal Parliament of 1868, and the other of the Conservative Parliament of 1874, reported in favour of this division of rates.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) asked if it was suggested that the owners should have separate representation if the rates were divided?

Mr. RATHBONE said, that if the right hon. Gentleman had offered to the ratepayers such an immense concession, as relieving the ratepaying occupiers of the payment of one-half the rates, and linked with that offer the condition that the owners should choose the selected members of the new Councils, the ratepayers would have accepted the one, on the condition of getting the other. [Mr. Illingworth (Bradford, W.): No, no!] His hon. Friend said "No, no;" but he thought he could hardly remember what was really one of the functions and duties of those Local Bodies. A large part of the administrative work of Local Government was the expenditure of money in the improvement of property, so as not only to improve it, but to make it most useful to the community—doing by the Local Body, as the representative of the owners of property (among others) that which could be better done by the community than by individuals. [Mr. Illingworth: Hear, hear!] If his hon. Friend agreed with him in that, did he not see how very important it was, if they were to combine the different talents and different powers of the different classes of the community for the public good, that they should have represented in the administration of those affairs those who were thus specially interested in them as the owners of property? He considered, therefore, it would be good in itself to force these men, the leisure classes and owners of property, who had of late been so neglectful of their duties, to take their fair share in the administration of local affairs. But, even if they did not give the owners direct representation, he contended that, even for their own sakes, it was of the utmost importance to bring home to them, before it was too late, by direct payment of rates, the immense danger, from their neglect of local administration, of finding numerous debts, for which their property would ultimately be responsible, tied round their necks for two generations and sometimes more. The widespread unpopularity of the system of *ex officio* members of Boards of Guardians, that very clumsy and offensive way of representing owners of property, arose, as a rule, from most of the magistrates taking no interest in the administration of Poor Law matters, and not lifting a finger to share the work of Boards of Guardians, but coming down when an appointment was to be made or a job to be done, and over-ruling those who had borne all the burden and heat of the day. Where two or three, or a few, *ex officio* Guardians attended regularly and worked shoulder to shoulder with the elected Guardians, not only were they not disliked, but the elected Guardians were very glad to have them, and often made one of them Chairman of the Board of Guardians—and those who had watched the administration of the Poor

Law carefully knew that those parishes where this help and co-operation took place between *ex officio* and elected Guardians were just the parishes administered the most economically and best in every way. If the District Councils were left as at present with this small amount of work to interest them, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to get those whose leisure, information, &c., would make them most valuable, to take part in the work. He (Mr. Rathbone) believed that the majority of the House would have accepted such a proposal, and he himself would have done so, because he believed there was nothing which would conduce so much to the good government of the country as that all classes should take an active part in it. The effect of the present system was, that in bad times, which was just when rates rose, the whole pressure and burden fell on the occupier, who was in general the less wealthy party of the two, and the one most affected by bad times as to his power of paying rates. But he thought this change was also as essential in the interest of the owners as of the occupiers. Their property was, after all, ultimately liable for local debt, and yet under the present system, as they did not feel the rise and fall of the rates directly, you could not get them to take any interest in local administration and expenditure until they would some day awake to find a heavy, perhaps ruinous, debt entailed on them and their posterity for a couple of generations. He was sure all practical men would agree with him in the results of his own observation—that it was only those classes that felt the direct, immediate impact of taxation who could be got, as a rule, to take interest in watching its expenditure and guarding against its excess. He believed he was also in accord with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in contending that it was most unfair and inexpedient that the owners of property in ground rents and royalties should be able to contract themselves out of the duty of bearing their fair share of the burdens of the country, whether local or Imperial. During the last 60 years enormous sums had been spent compulsorily in improving their property held on long leases under laws and for purposes which were never dreamt of when the contracts were entered into. The wonderful increase in the prosperity of the country had prevented that grievance being felt as severely as it otherwise would have been; but the advance in prosperity had slackened, and he was very much mistaken, unless the owners of such property were wise and just in time, if they did not find, within a very limited period, that they would receive scant consideration at the hands of the democracy when they first realized the power that had been placed in their hands.

The House must bear in mind the severe competition with which English industry had now to contend, and if they burdened that industry by excessive local taxation and debt, they would make it practically impossible to compete with other countries. It was said that if owners of property were so stupid as not to look after this danger, let them suffer. Yes; but while the owner had his income reduced, if their industries were crippled, the workman had his whole livelihood taken away. It was for the workman, not the owner, that he cared and pleaded. How were they to maintain their immense population if they went on with that accumulation of debt? Sixteen years ago he felt it his duty to bring under the notice of his native city (Liverpool) the total amount of their taxation and indebtedness, and to ask them to consider the danger of the rapid increase of taxation and debt of which they were thus made for the first time aware. He showed them that in 30 years local taxation had risen from 7*s.* 4*d.* per head to £1 5*s.* 3*d.* per head, and he asked their attention, as he asked the attention of the House now, to the lesson which Mr. M'Culloch drew, in his *Principles of Political Economy*, from the effect of neglecting such increase of taxation. Mr. M'Culloch says—

> "But whenever taxes become so heavy that their influence cannot be defeated by increased economy and industry, it becomes most injurious. The oppressiveness of taxation was in truth the principal cause of the lowness of profits in the United Provinces of Holland, &c., during the last two centuries, and of the decline of their manufacturing and commercial prosperity."

Well, they had not yet shared the fate of Holland, but many of the circumstances which preceded their decline were now paralleled with us; and the increased competition of other countries with us in manufactures and commerce had advanced much more rapidly than he then foresaw or ventured to predict, so that the danger of overburdening industries by excessive taxation had become imminent and most serious. If Mr. M'Culloch was right, which he firmly believed he was, in his estimate of the main cause of the decline of the commerce and manufactures of Holland, it was worthy of their serious consideration to observe how rapidly such a change could take place. But they need not go beyond the experience of their own country. There were some few Members in the House who, like himself, could remember a warning almost as significant as the fate of Holland, though, fortunately, from the courage and wisdom of the statesmen of that generation, the danger was vigorously grappled with and overcome. There were those among them who could remember how, previous to 1834, by a lax and wasteful administration of the Poor Law, this country was on the brink of ruin, material and moral, and in some instances the whole rental of parishes was absorbed by wasteful local expenditure, while their inhabitants were converted into paupers and prostitutes. The Report of the Poor Law Commissioners of that day showed that three-fourths of the inhabitants of a parish were paupers. At that point the pressure became intolerable. The landlords gave up their rents, the tenants their farms, the clergymen their glebe and tithes. As property had become worthless, no rate could be raised. Land in many places became unsaleable. He had attempted to show some of the points in which the Bill would require serious alteration if it was not to increase the defects of our Local Government, and promote—as he believed it would in its present state promote—expenditure, which would ultimately increase instead of relieving local taxation. There were other most important Amendments required, such, for instance, as in the Licensing Clauses and in the mode of selecting the selected members and other matters; but they would be dealt with by hon. Members who could speak on those subjects with special authority. It seemed to be admitted on all hands that the Bill was to be read a second time. There seemed to be no disposition in any part of the House to oppose the second reading. But he did appeal to the Government, on going into Committee, to propose or accept Amendments in the Bill to meet the dangers which he had pointed out. Among the precautions he desired to see taken were alterations in the Bill which would secure, first, the simplification of rates, areas, and Governing Authorities; secondly, a fair division of local burdens between owners and occupiers; and, thirdly, an effectual check upon local extravagance, and, above all, upon local indebtedness. It would be disgraceful, and show a want of patriotism and of principle if any Party spirit were introduced into the discussion of the Bill. All ought to be ready to bring their practical experience to the assistance of the Government in making the Bill as good as it could be made.

In conclusion, he might say that, although he might seem somewhat of a fanatic on that subject of local administration, yet his experience in it had led him to believe that mismanagement of local self-government and expenditure was perhaps one of the greatest present dangers to their material prosperity and character.

Mr. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.) said, that as a Representative of a great industrial community, he desired to express his hearty approval at this Bill being based upon the principle of popular representation on a widely extended franchise. He was satisfied that in 1888, to introduce a Bill on other lines would have been a tactical blunder of the first magnitude, and have led to certain failure. He was well aware that there were many persons, both in and out of the House, who ordinarily agreed with the Party to which he belonged, who felt genuine alarm at the wide extension of popular principles contained in the measure. But he would remind them, looking upon the question from a Party point of view, that the Tory Party had ever grown stronger and stronger as popular rights had become more and more extended. Between 1832 and 1867 the fortunes of the Tory Party were at a very low ebb indeed, for the first Reform Bill had swept away large classes of freemen, and was virtually a disfranchising Act, so far as the working classes in towns were concerned. But from 1867, when the household franchise was introduced, the fortunes of the Party had improved, and at the present moment were exceedingly satisfactory. Another point which had occupied the attention of a great many Members of his Party was the statement that one of the effects of the measure would be to destroy the influence of the squirearchy. He did not believe it would. He believed that the influence of the squirearchy would be quite as great under the new as under the old system. Their influence would, in his opinion, be largely increased by the fact that they would owe their position on the County Councils, not to the favour of the Lord Lieutenant, but to the suffrages of the people. He had sufficient confidence in the good sense and patriotism of country gentlemen to believe that they would not stand aside, and there was scarcely a county in which, if they came forward, they would not receive the hearty support of the rural voters. It was notorious that country people were well aware that the country gentlemen thoroughly understood the difficult and complex details of county government. Though the system of Quarter Session administration of county affairs might be to some extent behind what was called the spirit of the age, yet everyone would admit that the country gentlemen had, during a long period of years, conducted the affairs of the counties at Quarter Sessions with economy, efficiency, and a notable absence of anything like jobbery Therefore, he believed that the good service they had rendered in the past would serve them in good stead in the future, and there need be no fear that if the Bill were passed the influence of the country gentlemen would suffer to any appreciable extent. But whilst he was ready to give a hearty support to the second reading of the Bill, there were several important matters which it seemed to him called for discussion at the present stage of the bill He looked with considerable disfavour upon that part of the Bill which dealt with the management of the police. He regarded the proposal as set out in the 7th section of the Bill as an unmitigated evil. The County Councils would not have to make laws, but to administer them. It was by means of the police that the Imperial laws were enforced. If a case arose in which the wishes of the majority of the ratepayers of a district were opposed to laws passed by that House, as in the case of compulsory vaccination or the payment of tithes, what would happen? The police would be ordered by the County Council not to enforce the law, and the law would become a dead letter. For his part, he thought it would be better either to leave the control of the police in the hands of the County Justices, or, which he would much prefer, take this opportunity of placing the entire police force under the Home Office. He had another and a still stronger objection to this part of the proposed scheme. He understood that the measure now before the House formed a part only of a general scheme. It was proposed this year to deal with the Local Government of England and Wales alone, because of the extreme difficulty and complexity of the question. It was intended next year to extend the operation of the measure to Scotland, and it was intended ultimately to deal with a still more complicated question—that of the Local Government of Ireland. He ventured to think that no Unionist Government would ever introduce a Bill into that House dealing with Local Government in Ireland which did not reserve complete control of the police force to the Executive Government. At some future time—possibly at the next General Election—the country would be asked to pronounce a final opinion with regard to the Home Rule proposals of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and have presented as an alternative plan a Local Government measure of the Unionist Party which would involve an extension of the operation of the Local Government Acts for England and Wales and Scotland to Ireland. It appeared to him to be absolutely necessary that this measure for the Local Government of England and Wales should not contain any principle of first-class importance which the House would not be prepared to place in any Bill for the Local Government of Ireland. It, therefore, did seem to him that the proposal in this measure with regard to the control of the police was highly unsatisfactory. With regard to that part of the measure which dealt with the licensing question, he felt bound to say that the experience he had had on the subject led him to believe that the licensing powers of the Justices had always been honestly, fairly, and uprightly exercised. At the same time, however, he did not doubt that the County Councils would deal with licences in an equally fair spirit. Under the provisions of the Bill power was to be given to the Councils to do away with unnecessary licences, and, in his opinion, this was a power which might be exercised with great public advantages; but, of course, compensation was the necessary corollary to the withdrawal of such licences. The right hon. Gentleman had been labouring under a misapprehension when he stated that it had been decided that under the existing law licences could not be taken away without good cause. There had been no such decision pronounced by the Queen's Bench Division, although it was only right that he should say there was a great difference of opinion among the most eminent lawyers as to the effect of the Act of 1872 with regard to the point. But, certainly, whatever might be the strict legal aspect of the case, it had undoubtedly been the uniform practice for a long series of years to renew licences, and, upon the faith of that practice, large sums of money had been invested in the trade; and it would be a great breach of faith on the part of that House if it were to introduce a clause into this measure giving the County Councils power to sweep away existing licences, merely because the licensed houses were not wanted, without giving any compensation. With regard to beerhouse licences, the proprietors of those houses which were licensed before 1869 had an absolute vested interest in their licences, which was specifically set out and recognized by the Act of 1872, under which the Justices could not refuse to renew these licences except on the four grounds of unfitness set out in the statute. In dealing with such licences, therefore, the House would have to recognize the fact that such a vested interest did exist, and it would be a breach of every principle which had ever regulated its action if it were to authorize the taking away of such licences without compensation being awarded. The Bill appeared to have been defectively drafted in respect of the amount of compensation to be awarded, inasmuch as it set forth that the measure of compensation to be awarded in the event of a renewal of a licence being refused was the value of the house with and without the licence immediately after the passing of the Act. In the event of the value of a licensed house falling from £5,000 immediately after the passing of the Act to £2,000 a few years after, the County Council would, on refusing to renew the licence, still have to pay the sum of £5,000 as compensation. He presumed that the £5,000 in such a case would be the maximum amount of compensation to be paid in any event, and that it was intended that where the value of the house had fallen only its real value should be taken into consideration in assessing the amount of compensation. He thought the Bill would require amendment in this respect. Licensed houses continually change hands, and in such cases the price paid for them would never be more than a mere nominal one above their value at the time of the passing of the Act, and brewers and distillers would take care to protect themselves by never advancing a shilling more upon them than their value at the time the Act came into operation. As to the proposal to establish a County Council for the Metropolis, he was not quite able to gather from the speech of the President of the Local Government Board whether it was proposed next year to introduce a further and supplementary measure dealing fully with the question of District Councils and county government. It was important before the House was asked to accede to the proposal contained in the Bill for the establishment of a representative body in the Metropolis, that it should have some means of judging whether or not the District Councils were to be established on something like the lines laid down for counties in other portions of the Kingdom. Then, in connection with the licensing clauses, there was the proposal to give over to the County Councils the power as to Sunday closing. He objected to this for three reasons. In the first place he objected to the proposal because he thought that the question of Sunday closing was essentially a National and not a local matter. Sunday closing was either a good or a bad thing. If it was a good thing, an Act ought to be introduced dealing with the whole Kingdom. The system ought to be a uniform one. He objected altogether to a chance majority on the County Council determining a question of that kind. He objected to the proposal, in the second place, because he believed that the inevitable result of giving such powers to the County Councils would be to cause the Councillors to be elected not because of their special knowledge, but simply because they held strong views for or against Local Option. In other words, Sunday closing would become the test question of every election. His third objection was this. It had been shown that where Sunday closing existed the immediate result was the springing up of bogus drinking clubs. This, surely, would be a great mischief. He was, therefore, strongly of opinion that it was extremely undesirable to introduce such a proposal as this in the Bill. With those exceptions, he might say that the Bill, as a whole, was a thoroughly excellent measure. He believed it would not only tend to establish on a sure foundation the reputation of the President of the Local Government Board for courage and for statesmanship, but also tend in no small degree to strengthen and consolidate the great Party of which the right hon. Gentleman was so distinguished a Member.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he had to congratulate the Government in having such a thick and thin supporter of the Bill as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton). If the President of the Local Government Board had supplied hon. Members with an explanatory Memorandum dealing with the Bill, as had been suggested, the speeches and the debate would have been considerably shortened. He did not think the Bill was anything like so good a measure as the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), in introducing it, had led the House and the country at first to believe. Speaking to his constituents the night after the Bill had been introduced, while paying a tribute to the lucid exposition of the subject by the right hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. Broadhurst) warned his audience to wait until the Bill was printed before they came to any definite resolution one way or the other, as it was very unwise to judge of the merits of a measure by the descriptive account of its introducer. They had discovered that this caution was necessary. The superstructure of the Bill was no doubt captivating and showy; but it had been reared with little regard to the element necessary for success and stability—the foundation. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he was creating a sort of secondary Parliament in the counties, but little regard was shown to the connection between the County Council and the residents in the county. His own idea of constituting a proper system of Local Government would be to start from the parish as the unit, or at least from groups of parishes, and thus build up at the doors of the people a solid, sound representative body, and then to raise a great Central Council from it. The object of county government was not only to relieve Parliament and to improve the condition of county affairs, but to educate the people in the county, to bring them into as close touch as possible with the local governing body, and to give them as great an authority as possible over their local affairs. This Bill would not do this. The labourer and the mechanic in the rural districts would, to a great extent, be lost sight of in constructing the County Council.

Mr. RITCHIE said, there was the District Council.

Mr. BROADHURST said, it was true that there was a District Council, but the Bill left the vestries untouched. That was a great and radical defect in the measure before the House, and hon. Members on his side would do their best to obtain a thorough reform of Local Government based on real democratic lines, and not partly on democratic lines and partly on privilege, as they would discover county government to be if that Bill passed as it stood and nothing further was done. They had been led to believe that the Bill would abolish all property qualification, but the principle was not thoroughly carried out while they retained a property qualification in the case of the chairman of a County Council.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the chairman would be a Justice of the Peace as the Mayor of a borough was. A Justice of the Peace in a borough required no property qualification. In a county a Justice of the Peace did require such a qualification, and that was the reason for the provision referred to.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for his explanation, and thought that it only confirmed his (Mr. Broadhurst's) statement, and showed that the right hon. Gentleman had entirely misled them by his description of the freedom which was to pervade the constitution of those bodies. The County Council ought to have freedom in regard to the choice of its chairman. Again, they had been led to believe that the Council would be elected on the principle of one man one vote; but in Sub-section 4 of Clause 4 in the Local Government Electors Bill it was provided that nothing in that section should prevent a county elector from being enrolled in more than one division roll. That would enable an elector, by the acquisition of some small property subject to rating, to have a vote in every electoral division in the county in which he lived, and in all the other counties surrounding it if he thought proper.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the section said an elector might be enrolled in various division rolls, but he could only vote once for the county.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that was a considerable improvement, and he was glad of it. But the clause might easily mislead one into the view which he had expressed. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he proposed this Session to repeal the property qualifications, and to remove other anomalies attaching to the Poor Law system, and the right hon. Gentleman answered in the negative. The country would be exceedingly disappointed by that reply, and would not accept that as anything like a settlement of the question of Local Government until the Poor Law system was dealt with. The people had for many years been looking for the removal of the property qualification in regard to Poor Law Guardians; also for the doing away of *ex officio* members in those bodies and for the abolition of plural voting; and Ministers had led them to expect that when the question of Local Government was dealt with, those matters would no doubt come under review. But were they now to have what was to a great extent a sham representative system left standing side by side with the newly-created County Councils and District Councils? The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be desirous of linking the living with the dead. There was no branch of local self-government so pressing or so vital to the working classes as the administration of the Poor Law system, which mainly affected them; and yet now they had practically little or no voice in the election of the Boards of Guardians, and they could not by any means become members of those boards. Labour representatives had no chance of finding seats on those boards as now elected and constituted. That had been a long-standing outrage on the principle of popular representation; and if the Bill passed as it now stood, the Boards of Guardians would remain in all their naked deformity as the one institution in which the working people were excluded from taking their share. The Poor Law was administered by a class who had never shared the privations or experienced the discomforts and trials of the poorer members of the working class, and who knew very little indeed about them. The continued division of local authority would not be an aid to good government and reasonable economy. There would, if the Bill passed in its present form, be three distinct sets of officials—one for the District Councils, another for the County Councils, and there would remain the officials under the Poor Law system. The counties and districts would thus be officially governed and the Councils would hardly be able to resist the influence of their officers. If, on the other hand, one authority only existed there would be greater economy and better government. With regard to the elections, he suggested that it would be more convenient to farm labourers who might have to go a distance to vote if they were fixed to take place in April instead of in January. He regretted that the small boroughs were to be wiped out of existence. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had had anything to do with municipal government, he would perhaps hesitate before he took the course he had with regard to those boroughs. The fact was the right hon. Gentleman would have made a better Bill if he had not had before his eyes the ghost of the county squires. The vestries, with all their evils, were to remain as they were, and the elections in connection with them would continue to take place in the morning when only the parson, the squire, and their friends could attend. ["Oh, oh!"] He feared that the right hon. Gentleman had not attended his church regularly of late.

Mr. RITCHIE: I am a churchwarden.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that that might be so, but yet the right hon. Gentleman did not seem to know when or at what hour of the day he was called upon to take up his ecclesiastical duties. The Bill suffered in consequence of this proposal to retain certain powers in the hands of the Justices, who were not elected and who were not in sympathy with the people. The Chief Constable, for instance, who was the centre and motive power of the whole force, would still be elected by the Justices. They intended to protest against this proposal and to divide against it as often as they could. They would protest until they were met with the inevitable closure which generally followed debates which were objectionable to the Government. The Bill, no doubt, was a great measure in its outline, but its details were bad, deceptive, and misleading. It might be described as a great skeleton without either flesh or blood about it. If the frame of the Bill was filled up from the Opposition side of the House, the measure might become a decent and passable Local Government Bill, but it was evident that it had been prepared with a view to the feeling of Gentlemen whose conversion to Local Government reform had been very recent and hasty. The sooner the Government were made acquainted with the feelings of the labourers and artizans outside the borough boundaries upon the subject, the better it would be for all concerned.

Mr. DUGDALE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) said, the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had intimated to the Government his intention of dividing on the Bill in Committee as often as he could, and he (Mr. Dugdale), therefore, thought they had acted wisely in not adopting the course the hon. Member suggested they ought to have adopted, that of combining this already long Bill with the question of the reform of the Poor Laws. He (Mr. Dugdale) did not propose to follow the hon. Gentleman through the speech he had just delivered. He had listened to the debate as one who had been to some extent engaged in county government with the object of making a few remarks on the Bill from a Quarter Sessions point of view. It would be very satisfactory to the right hon. Gentleman who had introduced the Bill to find that the Quarter Sessions which had recently assembled throughout the country had expressed so favourable an opinion on it. Almost all had appointed committees in order to see what amendments were necessary to carry out the objects of the Bill. At the Quarter Sessions of which he (Mr. Dugdale) was a member, there was a large attendance. One or two gentlemen made speeches expressing their distaste at the prospect of losing the business of the county which they had for so many years efficiently transacted; but the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would be pleased to hear that the chief opponent of the Bill at the Warwickshire Quarter Sessions, after making his speech against the measure, voted for a resolution appointing a committee to endeavour to ascertain what amendments were necessary in order better to carry out the objects of the Bill. This showed that the County Justices did not look on this measure in any jealous spirit; and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Nottingham would find that they had determined not to frustrate its objects but to endeavour to improve it in every way they possibly could in order to make it efficient for the purpose of County Government. He thought they might take credit for having conducted their business with efficiency, integrity, and economy at Quarter Sessions, and when he heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) last night commenting in somewhat envious terms of the smallness of the county rates as compared with the excessive rates which were levied at Wolverhampton, he (Mr. Dugdale) had almost thought that the right hon. Gentleman was making those remarks as a prelude to a request to the House not to pass the Bill at all, but to leave the County Government in the hands of the Justices. Now, the present County Government was representative—it was not elective, but by the present Bill it would be both representative and elective. He said it was representative because it was well known that it was carried on by Justices from every Petty Sessional Division of the county. The Lord Lieutenant appointed Justices resident in the district to attend to the business of every Petty Sessional Division. He could speak from experience that it was the object of those who had the appointment of the Committees of Quarter Sessions to select gentlemen from every Petty Sessional Division in order that persons from every part of the county might help to carry on the work of the county. So that, although the Quarter Sessions was not elective, it was representative, as it embraced gentlemen from every part of the county who were able to make known the views, feelings, and wants of every district. He hoped that in making these new County Councils elective, care would be taken to make them truly representative. He did not think, however, that the Bill had been framed with sufficient care for that purpose. The right hon. Gentleman, in framing the Bill, had gone rather too much upon borough lines. He had not taken sufficiently into consideration the differences which existed, and would always exist, between boroughs and counties, because he had proposed by Clause 52 in the Bill that electoral divisions should be modelled as nearly as possible on population. That was all very well, and a very good test for a borough. By that plan they had all the area of the borough represented. They had persons in the Town Council who knew the wants and feelings of the inhabitants of the borough, but it was a different thing in a county. There were large areas in all counties where the population was very sparse, and if the representation of the county were modelled on population solely without regard to area, it would be found that when the County Council came together it would not have the representative character which the Quarter Sessions now possessed. And this was a very important matter; because, unless the different districts were represented by those who knew their circumstances and wants, a great deal of injustice would be done. What struck him very forcibly at this moment was the question of the main roads. That was one of the most important questions which would have to be dealt with by the County Councils. He, as representing the County of Warwick—and he thought other hon. Gentlemen acquainted with other counties would say the same thing—could assert that there was not nearly a sufficient number of roads treated as main roads. In point of fact, there were very few main roads beyond those roads which were originally turnpikes. Circumstances had brought about changes in the districts, so that some of the roads that were originally main roads were not, properly speaking, main roads now, whilst roads which were not formerly main roads were now used as such. In the County of Warwick this matter had been under consideration for nearly two years, and the County Authorities had been asked by local bodies and persons from different parts of the county to take charge of certain small roads and treat them as main roads. They had only complied in one instance. They had been on the point of choosing a general committee to inquire into the matter all over the county, but they had thought that as the County Government Bill would be soon brought in, this was a matter which ought to engage the attention of the Councils established under the Bill, and which ought not to be dealt with by the county magistrates just as they were going out of office. They had, therefore, postponed the question; but it was a matter that ought to come before the attention of the County Council on the earliest opportunity. He spoke of this now because the question of main roads was a question which required local knowledge; and, unless they had persons acquainted with the whole area of the county, who would be able to assist the County Council with their personal and local knowledge, they would be entirely dependent on the reports of paid agents and officials, and would not be able to give the same careful consideration to the subject as they would be able to do if they had the advantage of the presence on the Councils of gentlemen residing in the localities. This showed that there was a great distinction to be drawn between the county and the borough, and that what was a very good measure of representation for the borough, would not be at all suitable for the central management of affairs by County Councils. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would consider this matter when they got into Committee on the Bill. He might suggest that perhaps the most convenient method of arriving at a thorough representation of the county would be by taking the Petty Sessional Divisions as electoral areas, or some modification of them, because there could be no doubt that the Petty Sessional Divisions had been chosen and had been formed by the Justices to suit the convenience of the inhabitants of the county. And this being so, it was very likely that these areas, or some modification of them, would be convenient districts for the election of members of the County Council. But, of course, that was a matter which must be dealt with in Committee; therefore, he would not enlarge on it at the present moment. Now, it had been said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham that the County Justices were altogether out of touch with the rural population, and that they had no sympathy with them. When the election for these County Councils came to be made, the hon. Member would find that he was very much mistaken in his view with regard to the County Justices, and he (Mr. Dugdale) hoped and believed that the County Justices would take their part in the government of the county under the new conditions and would not hesitate to offer themselves as candidates, though it might be a new sensation and be rather distasteful to some of them—especially the older men who had had the greatest experience. But he felt quite certain that no body of men in this country were more popular with the poor and labouring classes than were the County Justices, and he was confident that the hon. Member for West Nottingham would find this out if the County Justices would only stir themselves, as he believed they would, and continue to take their proper place in the government of the county. And now he should like to say a word or two about the franchise which was proposed for the new County Council. He agreed very much with what was said on this subject yesterday by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse). The borough franchise was a very good franchise for a Town Council, but the county franchise would be much better for a County Council. He should be quite willing to accept that portion of the borough franchise which admitted ladies to the suffrage—indeed, he would go so far, when the time came, as to apply that principle to Parliamentary elections also. The qualification of councillors and the selection of councillors was a matter which ought to be dealt with in Committee; and he rather approved of the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvon (Mr. Rathbone) that the selected councillors should be elected by the owners. But as a matter of principle it certainly was most necessary and desirable that there should be some means of insuring stability and continuity of work in the County Council. He, therefore, thought that something should be done to make certain that some members—at any rate, at the commencement of the institution—should be rendered capable of holding office for more than three years. At the end of three years they would be just getting thoroughly acquainted with the work that was to be done—just beginning to work as it were. It was not work that could be learnt all in a moment. They would have to go to the central town—they would have to meet there from time to time, and if they were new to the work it would take them some time to get into it. It was, therefore, very desirable that there should be some provision, as was proposed in the Bill, for ensuring continuity and stability. He was very glad to find that the work of the Central County Council was to be confined to central work. It was impossible that these Councils could do their work in the same way that Town Councils did theirs, because the area was so large that they could not possibly attend to it. The District Councils would do the work, and he hoped they would do it well; but he thought with regard to these Councils, and here he was, perhaps, in accord with the hon. Member for West Nottingham—that every parish, unless it was a very small one indeed, ought to be represented in order that the interests of that parish might be properly seen to on the District Council, much in the same way that parishes were now represented on Boards of Guardians. When small matters such as the drainage of a parish were brought before the Rural Sanitary Authority, it was very important that every parish should have its representative on the Council, in order, if necessary, to stop extravagance in carrying out the scheme. Frequently parishes suffered very considerably if they had not efficient representatives on the Rural Sanitary Authority, before whom proposals of this kind were made. As to counties of towns he was not at all sure that the Government would be well advised in enlarging the number of those towns beyond that contained in the Bill. Those in the Bill should be made counties in reality. He wished to speak now of Birmingham, with which town he was connected. If Birmingham was large enough to be made a county of itself, it should be independent, and its present payment to the county rate ought to be commuted and ought to cease. It would be a great advantage to every town large enough to be a county of a town to have its own high sheriff, and he was sure that the high sheriffs of counties in which such towns were situated would be only too glad that this arrangement should be made. Nottingham was a county of a town now, and the system he recommended was there adopted, and was found to work well. The same thing should be done in the case of the new counties of towns which might be instituted. They should be made self contained, independent counties, with all the attributes of counties. And now he should like to say a word with regard to the police. He was bound to say he did not altogether agree with some of his hon. Friends in this matter. He should, certainly, prefer to see the police wholly in the hands of the Justices, but he could not agree that the plan adopted in the Bill would not work. He knew that most hon. Gentlemen around him thought that joint committees would not work at all, but he held a different opinion. He had seen a great deal of the working in the county of a joint executive committee of Quarter Sessions, consisting of a certain number of Justices and a large number of farmers, for the administration of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts; and all he could say was that no joint committee could work more harmoniously than this in Warwickshire had done, and no men could be more thankful for assistance rendered to them than were the Justices who were members of the committee to the farmers. Therefore, he was not in accord with the opinions of many of his hon. Friends on this subject. He thought it would be found that joint committees with regard to the police would work as well as the joint committees in respect of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, had done. On the subject of main roads, on which he had already touched, he desired to point out that the matter was not a local one at all. These roads were great thoroughfares. They would have to be re-arranged, and ought, properly, to be dealt with by the counties. He had wished for some time to see the day when the main roads of a county would not be left in the hands of the parishes, but would be managed by a central authority. The Wheel Tax was a tax which should be handed over to the County Authority, as it was a fair tax to apply to the main roads; for he did not think any hon. Gentleman on the opposite side of the House would disagree with him in saying that those who used the roads should contribute—at any rate to some extent—to the expense of repairing them. No doubt the turnpikes were an inconvenient mode of collecting the money, still they had done rough and ready justice. He had been rather surprised to hear the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton last night complain that the Wheel Tax of Wolverhampton would be spent outside the town, because it almost made him think that the wheels of Wolverhampton never went outside that borough. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman would, on reflection, be of opinion that it was quite fair that the Wheel Tax should be distributed over the county, and that it should not be simply devoted to the town where the wheels had to be put up for the night. It should go to pay the expenses of the roads over which they travelled during the day. He did not think there could be any difficulty in administering these main roads by a central body. No doubt, the county road surveyor would be responsible, and he could either repair the main roads through subordinates of his own or contract with the local authority in a district to do it for him. So much, then, with regard to main roads. He wished now to say a word or two with reference to parish roads—and here he must say he did not agree with the proposal of the Bill. The Bill proposed, practically, to divide the whole county into Highway Boards, because the District Council would be the Highway Board for the district. The central authority was the body to whom should be entrusted the administration of main roads; but the smaller roads were used principally by the parish or the neighbourhood, and did not require anything like the same amount of repair as the main roads, and it seemed to him that they would be much more cheaply and better attended to if the parish highway surveyor were not abolished. He knew that many hon. Members thought that the parish highway surveyor was a person who neglected his duty and left the roads in a very bad condition. That, however, had not been his experience. In his experience the parish road surveyor had done his work very well. And they must remember that he was an unpaid officer, and that they had much better avail themselves of unpaid labour, if they possibly could, than appoint a large number of paid officers and lead to jobbery. Then the parish surveyor was on the spot, and that should be considered. He could look to what was wanted, and could employ labourers at odds and ends of time when the men could not get work elsewhere—which was a very important thing in a district—and could use his own carts, and altogether do his] work better than anyone else. Something was said yesterday about occupation roads, and a hope was expressed that some provision would be made for repairing them. He hoped nothing of the kind would be done. Occupation roads were private roads, and ought not to be repaired by the public. As to work transferred from the Government Department, by way of a practical suggestion he would say this. They all knew a great deal about the services of the Inspectors of the Government Department, and he would suggest that a staff of these Inspectors should be kept up, and that their services should be available to the County Councils whenever those Councils had to undertake any of the work which was now performed by the Government Department, but which would now be thrown upon them. Surveyors were very eminent persons, but they were very expensive, and it would be found a great saving of expenditure if the Government surveyors were to consider it part of their duty to advise the County Councils. In this way the County Councils would not only be saved great expense, but would have the benefit of a wide experience which the Inspectors employed by the Government Offices possessed. He was afraid he had trespassed too long on the indulgence of the House, but he still wanted to say one word about the licensing clauses of the Bill. He was not one of those who could bring himself into such a state of mind as even to drop a silent tear at the county magistrates losing the power of licensing. He did not think the Justices' duty with regard to licensing was really much more than a ministerial duty. All were agreed that there were too many public-houses, but the Justices were not responsible for that. They knew, as was said by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton) that they were saddled with all beer houses which sprang into existence before the Justices had any power over them, the licensing authority being then the Excise officers. The more beer houses there were the more money came into the Excise, and the result was—and it should be a warning for the future—that the number of these houses which sprung up all over the country was far beyond the necessities of the population. When the Act of 1865 passed, and the beer houses were transferred to the magistrates, the beer house keepers were protected against the forfeiture of their licences, as had been mentioned by the hon. and learned Member for West Ham. It was, therefore, almost impossible for the Justices to reduce the number of beer houses, and, in point of fact, they had not been able to do so. Now, with regard to the licensing of public-houses, he thought there was a very erroneous impression abroad that the Justices had really an almost unlimited, absolute discretion in refusing the renewal of these licenses. That was very far from being the case. By Section 42 of the Act of 1872 no licensed person need attend the annual licensing meeting for the renewal of his licence, unless he was required by the licensing Justices to do so. The Justices were not allowed to entertain any objection, unless written notice of opposition and the grounds of objection were served on the licensed person seven days before the licensing meeting; and they were bound to take evidence on oath as to the renewal. Subject to that, the section of the Act said licences should be renewed. The words were "subject as aforesaid," and they had always been treated by Justices and Courts of Law as referring to provisions preceding them, and as limiting the discretion of the Justices to a judicial discretion, thus excluding an absolute, arbitrary, or capricious exercise of discretion; and if any hon. Member wished to see to what an extent that had been carried recently, he would quote a case which had only lately occurred before a Court of Justice. The case, which arose in the neighbourhood of Nuneaton, was that of "The Queen *v.* the Justices of Market Bosworth." The case was heard in the Court of Queen's Bench Division, and anyone who was curious to see it would find it in *The Times* "Law Reports," 3, page 620—the date being the 11th May last. It seemed that there was a public-house in Market Bosworth, of which a man named Palmer was the licensed tenant. In September, 1885, his licence was refused, but no one had given him the proper notice required by the Act. He did not appeal against the refusal. His licence ran out. He remained in the house without selling beer, and in 1886 he transferred it to a man named Chatham, and at the annual Licensing Sessions in 1886, the licence having been dead a whole year, Chatham applied for a renewal of it. He applied under the Act 9 *Geo. IV.* c. 61. The Justices refused the application, but took no evidence of any specific objection, treating the application as if they had a right to refuse it. They said they had a right to refuse it, because it was not required; but the Court of Queen's Bench granted a *mandamus*, and the case was sent back to the Justices who then renewed the licence. Now, Justices acted on that view of the law, and the result was that there was a very small diminution in the number of licences, and would continue to be so long as the matter remained in the hands of the Justices with their present jurisdiction; but those gentlemen who thought that public-houses would be brought to an end sooner by a mere transfer to another licensing authority were, he believed, very much mistaken. He found that between 1873 and 1887 there had only been a diminution of 27 public-houses in Birmingham, where the people were fully alive to the necessity of reducing the number of licences, and some of the old licensed houses had been pulled down; and with regard to the beer-houses, which did not come under the control of the Justices until 1881, there had only been a very small diminution in the number of them. With regard to new licences, it was well known that for the last few years these had to be confirmed by the licensing committee of the county, and the result was that few new licences had been granted. It was almost impossible to get a central independent authority to grant them, and he found that in Warwickshire during the last 13 years only 12 new licences had been granted. Under the circumstances, as the Justices had no absolute power to close public-houses if they were not required, it would be most unjust to take away licences without compensation; and, therefore, he thoroughly approved the principle of the Bill with regard to compensation. If power was to be given to any body of men to close public-houses and pay compensation, they must, of course, in these days be an elected body, and not a body like the Justices; but the compensation, should be reasonable, and he suggested that it should include only the ordinary publican's profit, and not that made by the brewers by what was called "tying," because it would not be right and fair to the ratepayers. The number of tied public-houses was increasing very largely, and the practice was neither good for the publicans nor the public, and it had recently extended to such a degree that not only was the beer tied to the brewers, but wines, spirits, tobacco, tea, and even matches. Therefore, under the circumstances, it was absolutely in the interest of the ratepayers that the appraisement of a public-house for compensation should not include brewers' profits. He would suggest as an alternative to compensation in money, that there should be the option to extend licences for a certain definite period, at the end of which they should absolutely cease. He did not wish to go into the questions of Local Option and Sunday Closing further than to say that he did not approve of the former, unless it was applied to very large areas; and that he did not think it would be an advantage to the public that public-houses should be shut up on Sunday in one parish or county and in the next parish or county kept open. There were many men who went for long walks on Sunday mornings, and it would be extremely inconvenient to them when at a distance from home to find that there was no house where they could get a mouthful of food or drink; and it should be remembered that the publican was bound to supply food as well as drink, and he was therefore, in that respect, a servant of the public. He considered it was a very valuable provision in the Bill that Clerks of the Peace and other county officers should be at once transferred to the new Boards, because it was quite impossible for any body of men to transact county affairs satisfactorily unless they had efficient clerks. Finally, he was confident that when the proposed change took place, the Justices would be found to assist in every possible way, their only desire being that the business of the counties should be efficiently carried on.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, that this Bill was welcomed by the country, because it was a serious attempt to arrest and, if possible, to reverse the fatal tendency to concentrate power in Westminster and at Whitehall, and to check the interference of Government in local affairs, which depressed local life and annihilated local independence. It was an attempt to return under modern conditions to the popular representations of early English times; but, bulky as the measure was, its omissions and reservations seriously detracted from its value as a final measure. Its most serious omission was the absence of any re-organization or even recognition of the parish, which he thought might have expected better treatment from a Conservative Government. The parish had been the cradle and nursery of local self-government in England, and the unit and even the kernel of the English representative system. It was the reeve and the four best men of the parish with the lords of the land and the parish priests, that formed the hundred of the early English organization, and it was the reeve and the four best men of the township, with the wealthy barons and dignitaries of the Church, who formed the shiremoot or County Council which the Government were trying by this Bill to revive; it was the germ from which the Commons House of Parliament sprang, and it had been and was still the unit of government. No doubt in England it had lost much of its former vitality, owing largely to the destruction of the open-field system and the shameless enclosure of commons, which had robbed the peasants and labourers of the parish of their interest in the land, and had thereby taken from them their local responsibility and, to some extent, their self respect. The legislation of the last 40 or 50 years had emphasized the change. The decline of the parish had been furthered by the formation of Poor Law Unions, by the Union Chargeability Act, and by the institution of the county police instead of parish constables. He thought the Government might have given some recognition of the important fact that the Education Act of 1870 gave new life to the parish, and Radicals might have expected from them some historic sympathy with this time-honoured form of Local Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should certainly have given greater consideration to this unit, for in his Radical days he made the parish the unit of his scheme of Local Government; but he now treated the most time-honoured of our institutions with contempt, and made no effort to give it vitality or new powers. This Bill really robbed it of many of the powers which it had hitherto possessed; at least, so far as Wales was concerned, it was to be merely an area for the election of the school board and the extraction of tithes. The Bill threw the bulk of power and responsibility not on the parish, which was accessible to most of the people, but on the local authority of the County Council, the body least accessible to the mass of the people; its whole framework tended to increase the power and duties of the County Council, the membership of which must be restricted to the leisured classes. That Council would draw to itself the power hitherto exercised by the Quarter Session boroughs of 100,000 inhabitants and other powers until now exercised by parishes, and would be further strengthened by the provision enabling the Privy Council to add to it. He appealed to the author of the Bill to mitigate this evil by not straining pedantically after equal electoral districts. He thought that definite instruction should be given to Quarter Sessions that they should pay the greatest respect to the area of the parish in dividing the county into electoral divisions, and that similar instructions should be given to the County Council in dividing District Council areas into wards. Even if the Government did not do that, he thought that the electoral divisions should not be a mere mechanism like a Chinese puzzle, but associations of inhabitants like parishes having common interests and living near one another. He pleaded for this particularly so far as Wales was concerned, because there the mountains cut up the counties into valleys and dales, having communities with a distinctive life of their own. He therefore hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would in Committee insert an Instruction to the apportioning body, if he might so designate it, to pay the greatest attention to the boundaries of the parishes, and especially of scattered parishes like those in Wales and in the North of England. In introducing the Bill the right hon. Gentleman said that, as there was but one door by which all who desired to take part in the Great Council of the nation should enter, so also there should be but one door by which all should enter who wished to take part in the County Councils. That was a most excellent principle to lay down, but he did not find in the Bill itself the application of that principle. This House of Commons is not made up of 500 Members elected by the constituencies and 170 Members selected by the elective Members. To state it is to condemn it. In 1836 this proposal of having selected members in local bodies was adopted, at the instance of a Tory Peer in the House of Lords; and he must say that, after 50 years of democratic rule, he should not have expected from the most reactionary Government any such proposal as the present, and he hoped before the second reading of the Bill took place the Government would be able to announce that they had given up this indefensible proposal. He thought that every member of the Council should be elected, even, in order to carry out the object of the Bill. In introducing the measure the right hon. Gentleman had said it was essential not to set up distinctions between member and member of the Local Councils, but that was exactly the principle which the Bill did set up. He would also suggest to the Government that instead of electing the whole of the County Council for three years, it should be elected for a period of four years, and that half of it should be renewed every two years, and that, instead of having annual elections with regard to District Councils, they should be biennial, so that elections for the County and District Councils would take place in alternate years. By those means the traditional spirit would be maintained in the County Councils; there would then be no serious interruption of their work, and the objection pointed out by the last speaker would be obviated. With regard to the police, they had heard that evening from the hon. and learned Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton) a most monstrous doctrine—namely, that the counties, and even the boroughs, should be deprived of the control of the police, and that they should be handed over absolutely to the control of the Home Office. Surely police despotism in Ireland must not in an enfranchising measure be extended to England and Wales. He thought that the limitations placed by the Bill on the popular control of the police were, one and all, mischievous. In the first place, it was mischievous to have a Joint Committee of Quarter Sessions and the County Councils. Why should not the control of the police be given to the representative County Council, as it had been entrusted for over 50 years to the representative Town Councils? But it was a greater anomaly still that the Chief Constable, who is the pivot of the whole police force of a county, should not be appointed and controlled by the County Council, who paid the salary, but by Quarter Sessions. That, he thought, was a distinctly retrograde provision. Another objectionable provision of the Bill was that power was to be given to the Justices of Quarter Sessions to employ the police for other than ordinary services, which simply meant that they would be used, as in Wales, for the extraction of tithes, perhaps of rack-rents, the protection of game, and the safeguarding of Emergency men. No doubt the latter ought to be guarded, but he thought the county should have some voice in the employment of the police for these extraordinary duties. With regard to the District Councils, he thought the way these were to be dealt with constituted a distinct blot on the Bill. It seemed to him that this body, the smallest recognized by the Bill, should correspond to the Communes which on the Continent formed the safeguard of popular freedom, because they had power to deal with all that concerned the social and neighbourly life of the people. M. de Tocqueville, a profound student of government, wrote—

> "The strength of a free people resides in the Commune. Communal institutions are to freedom what primary schools are to science—they bring freedom within the reach of the people, they teach them the peaceful use of it, they habituate them to its practice."

How did the Bill propose to make the District Councils in the rural parts of interest to the people? It was quite true that they were to have the administration of the Public Health Acts, and that certain powers now exercised by the parish were to be given to them. The villagers and peasants were closely and vitally interested in such matters as commons, allotments, plots for houses and gardens, pathways, and, in Wales, in extensive Crown lands which formed permanent pasture and sheep walks. Then there were the subjects of the education of their children, the disposal of local charities, the control of public-houses and of rivers, and the care of the poor; but every one of these things was precluded from the purview of the District Councils, and it seemed to him, therefore, that the proceedings of these Councils would, owing to these glaring deficiencies, be "flat, stale, and unprofitable." Greater simplicity would be secured, in his opinion, if these Councils were strengthened. The licensing question was, for instance, to be dealt with in a most cumbersome and unsatisfactory way, by means of new areas. But why not trust the people by giving the control of the liquor traffic to the District Councils, where they would really have some amount of power? It was by giving the control of these matters to them that the District Councils could alone be made of interest and value to the country people. He hoped that before the second reading took place the Government would distinctly announce that, if possible, next year the care of the poor would be placed in the hands of the popular Councils instead of Boards of Guardians; and at least, so far as Wales was concerned, there was the strongest desire that the control of all schools which received Government grants should be placed in the hands of the people. He ventured to suggest that power should be given to the County Council to re-arrange and occasionally subdivide the rural District Councils so that county towns should become centres of new districts. In many parts of Wales the Unions covered areas of 20 or 30 miles, and it was unreasonable to expect peasants to take a real interest in a body to attend which they would have to trudge the great distances he had alluded to. Instead of restricting the chairmanship of County Councils to those qualified to be magistrates, he thought it should be rather enacted that every chairman of District as well as County Councils should, by virtue of his office, be a magistrate. This would popularise the administration of justice, and add dignity to the fulfilment of responsible local duties. Then he wished to make some remarks on the financial proposals of the Bill, especially with regard to Merionethshire, the county which he represented. In the first place, he noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had ingeniously transferred to the County Councils the unpopular, the vulnerable, and capricious sources of revenue. The right hon. Gentleman, in his Budget speech, repeatedly spoke of the liquor revenue as a declining revenue, and he proceeded to re-adjust the local and Imperial taxation by making the county budget largely depend on the maintenance of the liquor traffic, and thus, while he divested the Imperial Government of all moral responsibility for the traffic, he safeguarded the revenue which he derived by making it the interest of the County Councils to keep open as many public-houses as possible. Then how will counties with absentee landlords fare in the apportionment of the other licences? In the county of Merioneth, Lord Newborough owned the royalties and ground rents in the Northern part, and three great landlords drew rent from the Eastern part, and three others from the Western part of the county; but not one of them lived within the county, and they would not, therefore, contribute a single sixpence of the revenue drawn from armorial bearings, licences for servants, carriages, dogs, and game. Then Merionethshire happened to have fewer public-houses than any other county in Wales, and, as he believed, also in England; and, at the same time, the Home Office had power to compel it to keep up the police force to its present strength, and even increase it; so that, the grant in aid to the county being taken away, there would be very little drawn from the taxes to be transferred to it. Coming into the allocation of the Probate Duty according to indoor pauperism, he could not enter into the question whether it was wise or not relentlessly to apply the workhouse test; but he said they could not apply the test in the same way to large towns, where the poor were very helpless, and to the rural districts of Wales, where there had been from time immemorial a neighbourly courtesy among the peasants which made the administration of the Poor Law much easier than in the former. Let the House consider how the principle of the Bill would work. London, with 54 per cent of indoor paupers, would receive 18*s.* a-day for every 100 paupers, while Wales would receive 3*s.* 8*d.* a-day for the same number. He trusted the Government would revise this inequality, for if not, the Welsh Members—and many English Members also—would offer a most determined resistance to the 21st clause. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) last night had expressed the hope that if the Bill passed it would diminish the work and expenditure of the Local Government Board. He was not quite sure whether the right hon. Gentleman was not using a little irony in making that reference, because if anything was clear, it was that the new arrangements would add immensely to the work and expenditure of the Department. For many years it would be, only in a limited sense, a decentralizing measure, and it did not touch the question of Private Bill legislation, with its scandalous expense and delay, nor did it give to Wales an elected Body which would have a superintending control over the vast and complex machinery which the Bill would set up. He said that such a Council as that, representative of and responsible to the Welsh nation, would not only control and superintend the local machinery, but would, by dealing with such questions as education, fisheries, Crown lands, and public works in Wales, lighten the ever-increasing burden of this House, and become a real, solid, and effective measure of decentralization.

Mr. TAPLING (Leicestershire, Harborough) said, that the country for many years had been looking for this measure, but it had fallen to the lot of a Conservative Government to bring in a Bill which would be something like a comprehensive settlement of this great question. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had said that he was disappointed with the Bill, although he approved some of its provisions. He could quite understand the disappointment of the hon. Member at seeing this measure brought in by a Conservative Government. The hon. Member went on to make an entirely unprovoked attack upon the county magistrates, who he asserted were not in sympathy with the people. He (Mr. Tapling) ventured to think that the result of the elections next January would show pretty clearly whether that was the case, and he was willing to leave the question to the electors who would have to be enfranchised under the Bill. Some hon. Gentlemen had said that they regarded with a certain amount of anxiety the results of the Bill, more particularly as it affected the magistrates by whom the county business had been so well performed. He did not, however, share that anxiety; on the contrary, he believed the people of England had quite enough common sense to elect the best men to do their business. They had trusted the people in the Election of 1886, and he, for one, was quite satisfied with the common sense then showed by them. He should not criticize the Bill at length, but there were one or two points on which he desired to make a few observations. It would perhaps have been more satisfactory if the numbers in the case of the new County Councils could be set out in the Bill, so that each county might know exactly how it stood in the matter of representation. Then, he had been rather struck with the opinion expressed the other day at a meeting of the Chamber of Agriculture in his own constituency, that some sort of qualification ought to appear in the Bill for the County Councillors. He was aware that this suggestion would not find favour on the Benches opposite; but the members of these Councils would have duties to perform of a very important character, and in future those duties would become even more important than those now assigned to them under the Bill. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had asked why the Poor Law administration was not entrusted to the new Bodies? Besides the Guardians, there were the school boards, harbour authorities, drainage, and conservancy boards, which were left untouched by the Bill; but he did not regard this as an absolutely final, but to a great extent a tentative measure, and if the Government found that it worked well, and that the present powers were exercised judiciously by the County Councils, he was perfectly certain that they would be loth to refuse an extension of powers to the Councils. The hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis) had referred to a subject of great importance—namely, that of Private Bill legislation; but he (Mr. Tapling) looked forward to the time when the congestion of Business in that House could be relieved by allowing to locally constituted bodies the same share in legislative as in administrative work, and when the expense incurred by the ratepayers in connection with Private Bills might be saved by allowing the Local Councils to carry out private legislation. His next point was that of the areas constituted under Clause 52. That had been referred to by the hon. Member for the Nuneaton Division of Warwickshire (Mr. Dugdale). The section provided that the divisions should be arranged with a view to the population of each division being as nearly as may be equal, regard being had to the last public census for the time being. He ventured to think that if carried out exactly as it stood the Bill would to some extent defeat its own object. The object was to confer on the counties the power of managing their own affairs at present possessed by the boroughs; but he thought he should show that unless other considerations besides population were taken into account, the county people would be absolutely swamped in their representation on the County Boards. He had in his hand some statistics relating to Leicestershire, which county he had the honour to represent. In that county the Billesdon Union had an area of 50,721 acres, a population of 12,000, and a rateable value of £107,428; but there were two small populous places called Humberstone and Evington with an acreage of 3,486 acres, a population of 5,000, and a rateable value of £16,584, and if the population of these boroughs was deducted, the population of the rest of the Union would be 7,000; and it would be found that while the rateable value of Humberston and Evington was £16,584, the rateable value of Billesdon Union was £107,428. Therefore, as the Bill stood, the rest of the Billesdon Union and the two places Humberstone and Evington would have about equal representation on the County Councils, although as far as valuation was concerned the rest of the Union really represented five times more property than was comprised in the two places he had mentioned. The result would be that the inhabitants of the country districts of the Union would be practically swamped on the County Board. Without wearying the House with other figures even more remarkable, he was perfectly certain that those he had given could be matched in other parts of the country, and unless some alteration were made he feared that gross injustice would be done by the rural districts being swamped in the manner he had described. He did not think he was asking anything unreasonable when he pointed out the necessity of rectifying this inequality. He urged simply that taxation and representation should go together; he was not asking that there should be anything in the nature of plural voting, but simply that those who paid the most money should be fairly represented on the County Councils and nothing more. Turning to the financial side of the Bill, he need not assure the Government how gratefully their relief proposals had been received by the county interest. The question had been before them for many years past; both sides of the House had agreed that some relief of local taxation was but fair and right, and he was glad to think that the time had come when the relief again and again promised was at length to be given to the greatest industry of all—agriculture. At the same time he had heard doubts expressed as to whether the relief was not more apparent than real, and it was feared that the new system of administration might prove to be more expensive than the former.

Therefore, he thought, if the relief was to be real, it must be made certain that economy would be one of the results of the measure. His own constituents were grateful for this large addition to the local revenues which would result from the allocation of certain taxes, at the same time they were afraid that it might all be swallowed up in increased expenses, unless some method of securing economy were inserted in the Bill. One method, perhaps, of promoting economy was that of the consolidation of rates. There were now different rates to be collected and different accounts to be kept, which, of course, involved so many additional officers, and he should have liked to see but one taxing and one spending body in each district, with one valuation, one rate, one machinery of collection, and one set of accounts. He believed that this plan would, as much as any, lead to economy in local administration, and if Her Majesty's Government could see their way, he should be glad to see some clause inserted which would effect what he was advocating. Another point regarded with some doubt was the borrowing powers given to the new authorities under the Bill; they would be anxious, no doubt, to make use of their powers, and he rather feared that some extravagance might result, as had been the case, though rarely, in some of the boroughs. He thought that the term of 60 years was too long a period for Local Government Board loans, and he should be glad to see it reduced to 30 years. The only remaining subject to which he had to refer was that of the division of rates. The principle of the division of rates between the owner and occupier had often been assented to by both sides of the House in the course of previous debates. This would have the effect of relieving a good deal of friction and in some cases of injustice. He wanted to see the burden on land adjusted to advantage of the landed interest, just as the one would adjust the burden on a horse. It seemed to him that an injustice was done in the case of long tenancies, because since the commencement of the leases new rates, such as the Education rate, had become very high, and it was not fair that the tenants should bear the whole increase which had occurred during the last 10 years. He thought, however, that this case was one for compromise. He thanked the House very much for the kindness with which it had listened to him, and he had now only to add his congratulations to the Government, to those they had already received, and more especially to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, on having introduced a measure of legislation which he ventured to say would be an enduring monument of constructive skill.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, that in the observations he was about to make he should confine himself to the Metropolitan aspects of the Bill. The first and most important feature, from that standpoint, was that it recognized the unity of the Metropolis and contained the great principle of one Central Body directly elected by the ratepayers. That was a great principle, and when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) announced it, they on the Opposition side of the House received it with cordial cheers. He (Mr. Pickersgill) could only regret that no sooner had the right hon. Gentleman put forward this principle than he proceeded to cut a "monstrous cantle" out of it by providing that one-fourth part of the Council should not consist of elected but of selected members. The right hon. Gentleman relied upon the precedent in the Municipal Acts for that provision. But surely the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that that provision was used as a sort of back door to admit in to the municipal bodies those whom the electors had rejected; and no doubt it would be, to a very large extent at all events, used for a similar purpose under this Bill. Then the Metropolitan Board of Works was to cease to exist. He (Mr. Pickersgill) was no admirer of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but there was another body existing side by side with it which certainly did not to any greater degree possess the confidence of the citizens of London, and which was, as he thought, a more extravagant Board than the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the operation of which had not been free from the suspicion of jobbery and corruption, and many hon. Members failed to understand why the Metropolitan Board of Works was to cease to exist, whilst this other Board—the

Metropolitan Asylums Board—was left. The second point, perhaps, which would attract the attention of the Metropolitan critic was this, that whilst the Metropolitan ratepayers were to provide for the cost of the police they were to have no control over them. Now the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said, as a defence of his plan of depriving them of the control of the police, that they constituted in themselves a great army. Well, great armies were or might be dangerous instruments, whether they were clad in red or in blue; and he respectfully ventured to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman a means by which he might subdivide this great army with advantage to everybody concerned—and perhaps by that means they might reduce the apprehensions which the right hon. Gentleman felt or would feel in handing it over to the ratepayers. Now the Metropolitan Police District was a vast area. It extended 15 miles all round from Charing Cross. It extended as far as Staines on one side, and Hatfield on the other; to Dartford on another side, and almost up to Reigate on the fourth, and it included districts the ratepayers of which had no common interest with the citizens of London. There was one particular illustration of the anomaly which was produced by the vast size of this area, to which he would invite the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. It was this. He was informed, and he had reason to believe, that at Bexley, which was a small village just within the Metropolitan Police area, there were 25 policemen, whilst at Dartford, which was not a village but a town, and which happened to be just outside the Metropolitan Police area, there were only four policemen. Now it did seem to him a great hardship to these ratepayers at Bexley and the neighbourhood that they should be paying a police rate which was practically 5*d.* in the pound, whereas if they were thrown into the county their police rate, he supposed, would only be 2*d.* or 3*d.* at the most. He would suggest, therefore, that the area of the Metropolitan Police should be curtailed and made identical with the Metropolis as it was defined by this Bill. That would very materially reduce the numbers of that great army, of which the right hon. Gentleman appeared to be somewhat afraid. Then this Metropolitan Police, so reduced in numbers, ought certainly to be placed under the control of the new County Councils. The right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, would tell them that London stood in a different position from Manchester and Birmingham. He would probably say that there were reasons of State which would render it extremely inconvenient for the Home Secretary, in certain matters of police, to have to carry out his designs through what would, in fact, be a Watch Committee of the Metropolis. Well, if those who had held Office in previous Administrations agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that there was a great deal in that State argument, then he (Mr. Pickersgill) would suggest a compromise, and that would be this—that there should be a Metropolitan Police performing the same duties in London that the Manchester Police performed in Manchester, and that there should be also a State Police for State purposes, under the control of the Home Secretary. That would very materially, as he had said, reduce the numbers of the great army which the right hon. Gentleman feared. Now, he (Mr. Pickersgill) passed away to another aspect of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) said last night that the great blot in the Bill was that the Poor Law system was excluded from it. He (Mr. Pickersgill) entirely sympathized with the spirit of that criticism, but literally it was hardly correct to say that the Poor Law system was excluded from the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had touched the Poor Law system, and he (Mr. Pickersgill) would point out that so far as he had touched it he had not done so advantageously, or, at all events, that whilst remedying one mischief he had opened the doors to others. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman proposed to relieve the poor rate both in the country and in London. Now, what was the source from which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to relieve the poor rate? It was by a tax upon personalty. Now the poor rate, he supposed the right hon. Gentleman would agree, was an hereditary burden upon the land. He was quite aware, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had reminded them the other night, that originally the idea was that stock in trade should be rated, but it was found impossible or inconvenient to rate stock in trade, and he believed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself described the poor rate as an hereditary burden on the land. Then, what was his (Mr. Pickersgill's) position? They were taxing personalty in order to relieve an hereditary burden on the land. That, he submitted, was bad in principle, but it might be commended by practical considerations of convenience. But he would submit to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that, if by taxing personalty he relieved the hereditary burden upon land, he ought, at all events, to impose a corresponding burden upon land in some other form; and so far as he (Mr. Pickersgill) could see, taking this Bill and the Budget together, there was no such readjustment of taxation between personalty and realty. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) last night said that London would get the lion's share of this grant in aid of the poor rate. He (Mr. Pickersgill) ventured respectfully to differ from the right hon. Gentleman, if he meant that London would get more than the share to which it was entitled. He did not think that was so. He thought that the true test would be to see what the effect of this grant would be upon the rate in the pound in the districts which they were considering. Now he found that this contribution—and he should like to have the particular attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board on this matter, because if he was wrong he should like to be corrected. He thought this contribution would reduce the average rate in the Metropolis something under 3*d.* in the pound, and that in the country it would reduce it something under 2d. in the pound. Now the average poor rate proper in the country was 1*s.* 1½*d.*, and in the Metropolis 1*s.* 6½*d.* Thus, the ratio of the poor rate in London to the poor rate outside was as 3 to 2, which was precisely the ratio of the relief which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board proposed to give. Again, he thought he must allow that it was not unfair in another way. The ratepayers of London, when this contribution was made, would still be left with an average Metropolitan rate of 1*s.* 4*d.*, as he calculated it, as against the average poor rate of 1*s.* in the country, so that it seemed to him that the county ratepayer would have no reason to be jealous of the Metropolitan ratepayer in this respect. He thought that, as between London and the country, the distribution was not unfair; but he had the strongest objection as to the proposed distribution as between the different Unions of the Metropolis. The County Council had out of this fund to pay to each Union 4*d.* a-day for each indoor pauper. Now that might be comparatively unobjectionable for the country, but there were special circumstances affecting London that required a different treatment, and he would briefly indicate what those circumstances were. Metropolitan pauperism was a common interest of London in a different sense from that in which, say the pauperism of Lancashire, was a common interest to the ratepayers of Lancashire. He need not labor that position, because it had been recognized by the establishment, more than 20 years ago, of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. Now, out of that Metropolitan Common Poor Fund considerably more than 40 per cent of the total cost of Metropolitan relief was defrayed. He (Mr. Pickersgill) had always contended that the whole cost of Metropolitan relief ought to come out of that Common Poor Fund, or, in other words, that the poor rate should be equal throughout London; but at the same time he had felt that the establishment of one Central Authority directly elected by the ratepayers, was a condition precedent to the establishment of that system. Now this Bill was going to bring such authority into existence. It was going to supply the one element which was wanting, and he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was apparently going to miss his opportunity. The right hon. Gentleman was not going to equalize the rate throughout London. Now, what was the plan which the right hon. Gentleman intended to adopt? It was a plan which seemed to him (Mr. Pickersgill) a very extraordinary one.

The new County of London would be identical with the area now covered by the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and the produce of the Probate Duty would be applicable to the common purposes of this area. Well, now, out of this Fund 4*d.* a-day would be paid to each Union for the maintenance of every indoor pauper; but at present, out of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, 5*d.* a-day was paid to each Union for the same purpose, and therefore the Bill practically proposed to raise this allowance from 5*d.* to 9*d.* Now, if that proposal had been made from those (the Opposition) Benches, he was sure it would have been opposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he thought also it would have been opposed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. [Mr. Ritchie: No, no.] Well, he (Mr. Pickersgill) would withdraw the remark as regarded the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, but, at all events, he would apply it to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because he had opposed that proposition in 1870. The right hon. Gentleman might, it is true, have altered his mind now, but this was pressed upon him in 1870—that the allowance of 5*d.* a-day was not sufficient for the maintenance of paupers—and what did he reply? He said it was never intended to allow the full cost of the maintenance, but that it was necessary to leave a margin for economy. He asked the right hon. Gentleman what became now of the margin for economy argument? What was the actual rate for maintaining indoor paupers in London? He took the Whitechapel Union, which he thought was a fair sample, and there the cost of maintaining an indoor pauper was 5½*d.* a-day, and they knew that Whitechapel was a well-managed Union.

Mr. RITCHIE: Does the hon. Gentleman include the cost of housing, or does he mean simply the cost of food?

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he was coming to the cost of housing; but, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, "the cost of maintenance" was a well known expression in Poor Law statistics, and he (Mr. Pickersgill) was using the word as it was used in the Report of the Department over which the right hon. Gentleman presided. He said that the cost of maintenance of an indoor pauper might be deemed, on an average, to be about 5½*d.* a-day. Well, the Guardians would receive 9*d.* per day per head, so that they would make a profit of 3½*d.* a day on every pauper maintained in their workhouse. He (Mr. Pickersgill) could see that the right hon. Gentleman thought he was wrong—and his reason was this, he imagined that he (Mr. Pickersgill) had not taken the establishment expenses into account. But why had he not taken establishment expenses into account? Simply for the reason that they were paid out of the Common Poor Fund, with the exception which the right hon. Gentleman had just alluded to—namely, the cost of erecting and maintaining buildings. He (Mr. Pickersgill) understood the right hon. Gentleman to contend that that invalidated his (Mr. Pickersgill's) argument. With great submission he maintained that it did nothing of the kind, because the buildings were there in any case whether the number of inmates was high or low. This Bill would enable the Guardians, as he had said, to make a profit, and they would do it by driving applicants for relief into the workhouse. Now it was possible that in some parts of the country, where the percentage of cost of outdoor relief was as high as 80, this inducement to offer the House might be regarded by some persons as beneficial; but in London they must remember that the percentage of cost of outdoor relief already scarcely exceeded 20, and, under these circumstances, he might say the inducement they gave to the Guardians to drive applicants for relief into the workhouse could only produce a mischievous effect. Now, the right hon. Gentleman pointed out to him the other night, when he spoke on this subject, that a great advantage would be derived by poor districts. Well, he (Mr. Pickersgill) was not likely to neglect the interests of poor districts. The right hon. Gentleman indicated that Bethnal Green, which he (Mr. Pickersgill) represented, would derive great advantage under this Bill. He (Mr. Pickersgill) quite admitted it. If he might say so, he was not likely to be indifferent to the interests of the ratepayers of Bethnal Green, and he knew exactly the benefit the ratepayers there would derive under this grant in aid; but his point was, that however much the right hon. Gentleman might benefit the ratepayers of Bethnal Green by this grant in aid, the ratepayers there would be much more benefited by an equalization of the poor rates, and an equalization of those rates seemed to him to be the solution which reason and justice demanded. The plan which the right hon. Gentleman embodied in his Bill would introduce new inequalities. He (Mr. Pickersgill), taking the figures for 1886, had worked out its effect in St. George's-in-the-East, which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board represented, and also in Bethnal Green, which he (Mr. Pickersgill) represented. The grant in aid of 4*d.* a-day would reduce the poor rate in St. George's within a fraction of 1*s.* in the pound, which was a very large reduction, but the reduction in the pound would not be nearly so large in Bethnal Green, in which he was interested. The reduction in Bethnal Green, making the same comparison, would be only 8*d.* in the pound. The poor rate proper, as he calculated it in St. George's, was, in 1886, 1*s.* 11*d.*, and in Bethnal Green 2*s.* 1*d.*, and with the reduction it would be 11*d.* in St. George's, and 1*s.* 5*d.* in Bethnal Green. But if they allowed for this grant, the average rate over the whole Metropolis, as he worked it out, would be 1*s.* 4*d.*, so that Bethnal Green would be paying 1*d.* more, and St. George's 5*d.* less, than in justice it ought to pay. Now, that was not equality; but he must admit that St. George's came very well out of the matter. Now, the reference of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to the cost of buildings gave him (Mr. Pickersgill) a fitting introduction to another remark. He had lately obtained, through the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman, a Return of the pauper establishments of the Metropolis; and, having carefully gone through it, it seemed to him that the present pauper establishments supplied ample accommodation for existing needs. What was wanted was a thoroughly efficient system of classification and distribution. The results which were anticipated in this respect from the Common Poor Act of 1867 had not been realized. The 50th section of that Act contemplated the provision of workhouses by the Guardians, and made provision for the maintenance in those workhouses of paupers belonging to other Unions; but very little if any use whatever had been made of that section. It seemed to him that classification and distribution could only be effected by means of a strong Central Authority, representative of the London ratepayer. Well, they hoped that they were going to see brought into existence such a strong Central Authority. What he should like to see, therefore, would be this—that the whole cost of the Metropolitan poor, less the grant out of the Probate Duty, should be defrayed by an equal rate levied over the whole of London. Then he should like to see the Metropolitan Asylums Board cease to exist, and its powers transferred to the new County Council of London. Then the power of control over the Guardians, which was now possessed by the Local Government Board, should be transferred to the new County Government; and with regard to the Guardians themselves, subject to this control, they might either continue to exist, or, what would be better still, their powers might be transferred to the new District Councils, which he hoped to see brought into existence. Whether they called the body Guardians, or whether they called it District Council, certain modifications were urgently required in the present constitution of Boards of Guardians. They wanted to be rid of the *ex officio* Guardians; they wanted to be rid of plural voting; and they wanted, even still more, perhaps, to abolish the present rating qualification for Guardians, because it seemed to him most essential that the working classes should be permitted to take their proper part in the administration of the Poor Law. Well, regarding this Bill as a whole, and regarding it purely from a Metropolitan point of view, if it was read a second time, it would be taken simply as an instalment; but, even taking it as an instalment, it contained many blots which they on that side of the House would do their best to remove if it should get into Committee.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, he desired, in a few words, as a Metropolitan Member, to offer his sincere congratulations to Her Majesty's Government, and especially to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), who was in charge of the Bill, on the general character of the great measure they were now asked to read a second time. He heartily welcomed the Bill as an admirable attempt to extend, not only to the counties, but also to this vast Metropolis of greater London, those representative institutions which had so long and so profitably been enjoyed by our municipal boroughs. To those who pointed to the fact that in the counties there was no great demand, and that, perhaps, there was no great necessity, for any transfer of those executive functions which had been so long and so efficiently and, above all, so economically performed by Quarter Sessions, he replied—"True; but there was a great demand and there was a great necessity for a full revision and relief of local taxation." That was admitted on all sides, and that revision could not possibly be effected without the creation of elective bodies to control the expenditure of such vast sums of public money. But within the Metropolitan area the case for the Bill was far stronger even than it was in the counties, for in the Metropolis there was undoubtedly a demand, and there was a necessity, for a more efficient and a more economical discharge of many administrative functions. He doubted whether there was a single Metropolitan Member in the House who had not pledged himself to some extent in the direction of reform, and he, therefore, thanked the Government for thus enabling the Metropolitan Members to go back to their constituencies with this instalment, this very real and substantial instalment, of reform. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for South-West Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), that they should regard the measure as an instalment only. That was, he thought, admitted on all hands, and certainly it had been admitted perfectly frankly by the right hon. Gentleman the author of the Bill (Mr. Ritchie). It was clear that there were educational matters, that there were Poor Law matters, and that there were many other matters that would doubtless subsequently be dealt with; but, in opposition to the hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Bethnal Green, he contended that the Government was obviously most perfectly right in refusing, if he might use a metaphor which was now perhaps obsolete, to attempt to drive four omnibuses abreast through Temple Bar. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) earlier in the debate called on the Government to extend the purview of this heavily-weighted Bill, and he somewhat imperiously demanded the inclusion of the Poor Law administration. But then the hon. Gentleman proceeded to justify the action of the Government by talking about dividing the House in Committee as often as he possibly could. He (Sir Roper Lethbridge) hoped the hon. Member would reconsider that decision before they got into Committee, for, he thought, and he put this respectfully to the hon. Member, that the whole country was anxious, nay, was determined, that the Committee stage of the Bill, when it was reached, should be utilized, not for unprofitable and obstructive Divisions, but for valuable Amendments that would make the Bill a better instrument for promoting the welfare and the happiness and the prosperity of the whole country. For his own part, he hoped that that stage would see, for instance, the dropping of those clauses which provided for the selection, or co-option of a portion of the County Councils, at any rate in respect to the Metropolis. In London, at least, that method was open to some serious objection. They already had, and it was universally admitted, much difficulty in obtaining, for local work in London, really good men to offer themselves, and he thought that if the co-option clauses were persevered with and retained in the Bill, the best men would not come forward as candidates, but would wait for co-option; and more than that, even if they did come forward as candidates, their claims would be rejected, because everyone would regard them as certain of co-option. One other little point hitherto unnoticed he desired to mention. He should hope to see all the numerous charitable endowments which were scattered throughout the country, and were now often treated like shuttle-cocks between the Local Authorities and the Charity Commissioners, brought under the full control of the Local District or County Councils. But he suggested to the hon. Member for South-West Bethnal Green and those who thought with him, that these were details that ought properly to be left for discussion in Committee on the Bill. He should give his most hearty support to the second reading.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) asked the attention of the House to one important part of the Bill which had received little consideration. The Bill was so comprehensive that it dealt with many important subjects; but among all of them the health and well-being of the community was one of the most responsible duties of local administration. They were decentralizing many powers relating to Local Government; but they ought to be very sure, in such an important subject as the health of the communities, that the decentralization would be accompanied by guarantees that public health should not suffer now or in the future by the new forms of Local Government. Rather the House should be convinced that this new measure would create such an intelligent interest in regard to the health of communities, and impose such a sense of responsibility upon the Local Authorities that there was a certainty of a large improvement and no chance of any deterioration in public health by the working of decentralized Local Government in the future. Proceeding to remind the House of the present condition of the law, he pointed out that, under the Public Health Acts, vaccination, drainage and sewerage, the prevention of epidemic diseases, and other subjects relating to health, were performed by Local Sanitary Districts, urban or rural, under strict subordination to the Local Government Board, to which Parliament had confided very large powers of supervision and control. That Board had a remarkably good Medical Department, with Medical Inspectors of Health, to enable it to perform the powers imposed upon it by statute. Most of those powers were passed over by this Bill from the Local Government Board to the County Councils, who were to act in future by their own common sense and without that skilled intelligence and knowledge which enabled the Local Government Board, through its Medical Department, to exercise a wise and expert control. The decentralization of sanitary powers was generally thorough, though there were exceptions. Thus, in regard to vaccination, Clause 23 was logically absurd. The present practice of public vaccination imposed upon the Guardians the duty of paying 1*s.* 6*d.* per case; and the Government added 1*s.* if the Medical Department at Whitehall were satisfied that the vaccination had been efficiently and carefully performed. That payment by results was made by the judges of the results—that is, by the Government Department. Vaccination in the future was not passed over to the management of the County Council, which he thought it should have been, because it was not wise to connect it with Poor Law, but it was to continue under the Guardians? Who was to pay for results? Clause 23 imposed this upon the County Council, but it did not impose upon that body the responsibility of seeing that the results were efficient. The Local Government Board reserved that central power for themselves, and the County Council were to pay upon their certificate. Could anything be more illogical? Vaccination was to be performed by the Guardians, but to be supported by subventions from the County Council, who had nothing to do with the work, upon a *mandamus* from the Local Government Board. There was no decentraliaztion of power here, only a decentralization of payment for work not performed by the Local Authority which did pay. That was the chief instance where centralized power was still preserved in the Bill. The other sanitary clauses produced a violent dislocation of the safeguards which legislation had imposed in case of local defaults, and removed responsibility for public health from a Central to a Local Authority. He did not object to the principle, if the local safeguards were sufficient; but, after a close examination of the clauses, he thought them quite insufficient, and to that he desired to draw the attention of the President of the Council, not in unfriendliness to the Bill, but with the hope that he might give fair consideration to his criticisms. The sanitary executive of Local Authorities depended on Inspectors of Nuisances and Medical Officers of Health. The Inspectors of Nuisances were officers of a purely local character, and he did not propose to discuss their functions. Hitherto, powers of control and sanction had been reserved to the Local Government Board in London, advised by their Medical Department, which was a great intelligence department of sanitary knowledge. These powers of control and sanction were chiefly passed over to the County Councils. In doing that the County Councils

Councils ought to have been made little Local Government Boards, with supervision of the work of the District Boards, and with professional advice at their command; so that they might be assured that the sanitary work was being done in an efficient way throughout all the urban and rural districts comprised in the country. All that had been lost sight of in the construction of clauses. The Medical Officers of Health were not the servants of the County Council, although it was to pay one-half their salary. The Health Officers were not to report their work or make returns to their paymasters, the County Council, but were to do so to the Central Board in London, to which was reserved the powers of stopping the salary if the returns were not made. In fact, the County Councils, which assumed the place of the Local Government Board as to powers, were left to exercise those powers without knowledge or efficient control. The County Councils were to exercise the powers of the 191st clause of the Public Health Act—that was, they were to determine the qualifications of medical officers and to control the tenure of their office. But, curiously, they were not to prescribe their duties, for that was reserved to the Local Government Board. The Central Board in London had to prescribe the duties of district Medical Officers, to receive reports, to mulct in pay when necessary; while the County Councils were to have the barren honour of fixing qualifications, of paying half salaries, but to have nothing to do with the performances of the duties of the Medical Officers to whose salaries they contributed. He at once admitted that the County Council, as the Bill constituted and limited it in powers, could not adequately see to the performance of the laws relating to public health, because it was not put into any intelligent touch with its component districts, and had no means of getting information from them. All the information worth having was to go to Whitehall direct from the District Councils. But even if that were changed in Committee, by enjoining the Medical Officers of Health to transmit their reports through the County Council, that Body had no expert knowledge to aid it, for it was not in direct communication with a single Medical Officer of Health. In fact, the whole organization of the sanitary service in rural districts was, even now, though under the immediate control of the Local Government Board, desperately inefficient. What it would be in the future, when that expert control was dislocated from it, might be readily imagined. Let him give an example from one of the best counties—Cheshire—which had gone far to improve the organization of the sanitary service. That county had consolidated the duties of the Medical Officers of Health into large areas. One consolidated area had 280,000 acres, with a population of 135,000 persons. It had the entire services of an able Officer of Health, who had a salary of £800. Another consolidated area in the county had 139,000 acres, with a population of 84,000, and the Medical Officer of Health had a salary of £635. But the rest of the county had not shown this intelligence, and there remained 213,000 acres, with a population of 420,000 people, split up among 28 Medical Officers of Health, who, if he excluded Birkenhead, had salaries ranging from £10 to £75. He had selected one of the most intelligent counties to show how combination of areas and subdivision of areas act. By the first system of combination, they secured the services of a man of high qualification, educated in public health, which was only recently a separate subject of medical education; while, on the isolated plan, they had simply country surgeons knowing nothing of the science of public health, who gave some fragments of their time to sanitary duties and to the preparation of reports to the Local Government Board. The less these officers did the more were they pleasing to Local Boards. The people would rather have their dunghills and nuisances left alone, as in the time of their fathers, than have them stirred up by the stick of a parish doctor. They were paid to do nothing, and they did nothing. And what was the result? That while our towns had largely improved under sanitary legislation, as they generally possessed well qualified Medical Officers of Health, the rural districts, as a whole, had not shared in this rate of improvement, and their disease and death-rate remained much what it was. At the present time there were about 1,200 Medical Officers of Health, with salaries ranging from £10 to £900. He believed that there would be far more efficient sanitation in the country if their numbers were reduced to about 180, with larger areas, and with public health as their sole duty and not as an accidental adjunct to their private practice. If he excluded the scheduled towns and London, 180 Medical Officers would be well able to supply the best sanitary knowledge to the remaining 18,000,000 of people. That was one to 100,000 population, which was less than that contained in the combined sanitary areas of Cheshire and other places. This would give four or five to an average county. There was now about £130,000 annually spent upon these Medical Officers of Health. He believed that, without increasing the cost, an infinitely better result could be obtained by this consolidation of districts. Instead of this considerable sum being, to a large extent, wasted by the present system, a thoroughly effective method of sanitary administration would be obtained. To produce that very desirable result the simplest Amendment would be sufficient in the present Bill. The change which he would propose was that all Medical Officers of Health should be made officers of the County Councils and not of District Councils. There already existed abundant powers in the Bill for the consolidation of areas for the purpose of Medical Officers of Health. If all of those were made officers of the County Councils, there would be a speedy exercise of these powers; but that never would result where the District Councils had a motive in keeping stingily paid officials to do nothing. Let the House consider what benefits would ensue by such an arrangement. Every County Council would have, on an average, four or five skilled experts in public health to consult in all emergencies. Instead of the Local Government Board being left to correspond with every petty district, the reports would go to the County Council, be discussed by their experts, and be transmitted to the Local Government Board. According to the present provisions of the Bill, the County Council had no means whatever of knowing about the sanitary conditions of its component districts. Notwithstanding that fact, the right hon. Gentleman gave the County Council the strong powers of the Public Health Act, Sections 42 and 299, by which defaulting District Councils could be compelled to execute certain works in regard to which the County Council had no knowledge, and no organization by which it could attain knowledge. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) might reply to his strictures and to his proposals, that he had not recognized that this was not a Bill to make new sanitary legislation, but only one for transferring existing administrative powers. That would be a good enough answer if it were not the fact that he was producing a profound dislocation of powers by transferring them from a central office possessing the highest expert knowledge to County Councils, which possessed none. That was the very essence of the success or failure of the new organizations in regard to public health. Of course he was quite prepared to submit his recommendations in the form of a simple Amendment. At the same time if he had succeeded in convincing his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board of the advantages of the proposal to the health of the community, he was sure that it would be much better done if he undertook to make these changes in the Bill. He did not propose to make compulsory consolidation of districts, though he would convert all Medical Officers of Health into Officers of the County Council and make them report to that body, and through it to the Local Government Board. The consolidation of areas and the organization of public health would soon follow when the County Councils felt immediate responsibility for the health of the whole district. Let him say, in conclusion, that sanitary science was not an abstract science, but one which in its applications had produced enormous benefits to the community, not only in preventing unnecessary deaths, but in keeping in health and productive ability the living. Many diseases which formerly afflicted this country were now a matter of history. Ague was once a most formidable disease in England, and now it scarcely existed. It used to be very bad in London, and killed James I. and Cromwell. No physician now meets cases originating in London in our time. In his (Sir Lyon Playfair's) youth typhus was a common disease. It is practically extinct, though now and then it sprang up in some very foul conditions of a locality. There used to be two forms of disease peculiar to cities—bowel complaints, which carried off 3,000 to 4,000 persons annually in London. They were extinct, and had left to us neither a popular nor scientific name to distinguish them. Typhoid fever, which wholly arose from filth, still stayed with us as a scandal to our sanitary administration; but even in this case the mortality from it in England and Wales had decreased by fully one-third in the last 20 years. Remittent fever had left our shores, and rickets, once so frequent, existed no longer. He appealed to the Government to send down the Bill to the country in a condition which would improve and not deteriorate the health of our population. This Government was a successor to one which once appealed to the people in the words of Mr. Disraeli that its motto would be "*Sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas.*" He thanked the House for listening to him on this important subject, which had some chance of being lost sight of in the political aspects of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes) said, he thought he need hardly assure the House that he did not intend to follow the right hon. Gentleman into the details of a speech of so much ability and interest. He might say this much, however, on behalf of the Department which he represented, that they valued, as they ought, any recommendations which came from so high an authority, and that the opinions expressed by the right hon. Gentleman in connection with the administration of the sanitary laws of this country would receive, at the hands of the President of the Local Government Board, that consideration which they were justly entitled to receive. But he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would not think that he was venturing in any way to criticize his remarks if he said that, although undoubtedly from a sanitary point of view there was a great deal to commend in the views just expressed in connection with the measure, both to the Government and to a people anxious to see the condition of the country improved, they, at all events, were difficult to associate with a Local Government Bill of this form. He thought that the criticism which the right hon. Gentleman himself applied to his own remarks at the conclusion of his speech was one which might justly be used by the Government or by those anxious to see the measure carried through the House with as little impediment and delay as possible. The debate, so far, was one upon which he thought the Government, and he hoped the House and the country, had every reason to congratulate themselves. The great question of local government had been considered by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and by the majority of hon. Members who had spoken from the Opposition Benches, in an eminently dignified way. It had been considered as a question not of Party politics, but one deserving the disinterested attention of all quarters of the House. He could not help congratulating the Government and the Conservative Party upon the fact that the debate on the second reading, so far, had been a most convincing and most complete refutation of the charge more than once uttered by hon. Members opposite. The Government had heard more than once the statement made that the Bill had been received by cheers from the opposite Benches and with silence from the Ministerial side. He was present when the Bill was introduced by his right hon. Friend, and he had listened to the subsequent debate as carefully as anyone. He was not aware, however, that the cheers from the Benches opposite were either so enthusiastic or so numerous as had been stated. But there was this comment to make. The speeches that evening had come equally from his own side of the House and from the other, and he challenged any one to say whether he was not right in stating that the criticism of a favourable character towards the measure had come more from the Conservative than from the other side of the House. The Government had, therefore, reason to congratulate themselves when they heard this view taken by hon. Gentlemen on the Conservative side who were and had been for many years honourably connected with the administration of county business through the medium of Quarter Sessions — gentlemen who had performed their work conscientiously and honestly; and who knew, however well these County Councils might perform their work, it would be impossible for them to administer county affairs with more single-mindedness, honesty, or determination to save the public purse. It was not to be wondered at that hon. Gentlemen connected with Quarter Sessions felt some regret and soreness at the approaching dissolution of a body with which they had been connected, and which they knew by experience had done its duty well. It was not the fact, however, as had been stated, that hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House had watched the introduction of this Bill with dismay. Those who had heard or read the debate on this Bill in the House, the discussions at Quarter Sessions, and the letters in the public papers, could not but admit that the reception of this Bill on the part of those connected with the Quarter Sessions had been extremely generous. The Government appreciated very highly the kindness with which this Bill had been received both inside and outside the House. The debate on the second reading of this Bill had been somewhat peculiar. Generally, in relation to a great measure such as this, there was some great principle which divided the two Parties in the House. But this Bill appeared to be an exception to that rule, and the debate which had taken place had been more like a discussion in Committee. There had been a variety of criticisms, but no real attack on the principle of the Bill. The debate was commenced by a speech of singular moderation and of great ability by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), and that speech was followed by speeches from other quarters of the House, in some of which it was noticeable that though a few points were singled out for commendation, there was a strenuous effort to cast blame on various details, and a lurking appearance of a desire to divide against the second reading. It remained to be seen whether these hon. Gentlemen would carry out their apparent desire, or abide by the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. The right hon. Gentleman himself had made one important criticism on the Bill which was rather singular as emanating from him. He expressed regret that the Bill did not deal with the parish, but commenced at the top, as it were, instead of at the bottom. Several other hon. Gentlemen had expressed the same view, but only one of them, the hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis), had explained in what way he would reform the parish. This criticism was rather remarkable as coming from the right hon. Gentleman, for the right hon. Gentleman had himself been associated with legislation that had for its object the upsetting of the government of the parish; and he had been informed that in a speech publicly delivered not long ago, not 100 miles away, the right hon. Gentleman said this Bill was one of which he would not have been ashamed to claim the parentage. In the short interval that had since elapsed the right hon. Gentleman had apparently changed his opinion, not owing to any change in the features of the child, but, seemingly, owing to the influences brought to bear upon the right hon. Gentleman's own mind. He ventured to think that this was one of those cases in which second thoughts were not best. The Government were now told that they had proceeded in the wrong direction, and that the parish and not the county ought to have been first reformed—that they ought to have begun at the bottom and worked upwards. That sounded very well, and if they were establishing county government in a new country, and with power to divide it up as seemed most convenient, the parish, no doubt, would be the first point to which to address oneself. But there were nearly 15,000 parishes in England, of which considerably over 8,000 had a population not exceeding 500 people, and 6,398 with a population not exceeding 300. Did the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members think that this scheme of Local Government ought to have dealt with all these parishes, a large proportion of which had so very small a population? The right hon. Gentleman said there would be great difficulty in getting in one and the same Union one body to act as guardians of the poor and another to act as a District Council; but if there would be such a difficulty in a Union, how much greater would it be to find persons willing and competent to form two such bodies in a small parish?

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, he never proposed that there should be two such bodies in a parish.

Mr. LONG said, that the right hon. Gentleman, while complaining that the parish was not reformed, made the very vaguest of suggestions as to how it ought to be reformed.

Mr. STANSFELD said, he had not blamed the Bill as a whole; he praised it. On a future occasion he would be quite prepared to state what ought, in his opinion, to be done.

Mr. LONG said, he was merely trying to show that this point as to the parish was the only one about which there appeared to be any consensus of opinion on the other side of the House. It must, however, be borne in mind that Her Majesty's Government had not merely dealt with a reform of Local Authorities, but also in a generous and comprehensive way with the question of finance. But if the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman had been taken and the Government had commenced with the parish it would have been impossible to have carried out this important reform in local taxation. Something, nevertheless, had been done in the direction desired by the right hon. Gentleman. These County Councils were given large powers to deal with areas which required re-adjustment, and any future reform of the parish such as might, no doubt, become necessary would thereby be simplified and rendered the more easy to carry out in consequence of these County Councils being first established. He next came to the question of rating. Regret had been expressed that the Government had not included in the measure a valuation scheme. It seemed to him that there was a general impression that this Bill ought to have reformed every abuse that existed in England and Wales at the present moment, and that hon. Members were justified not only in criticizing the Bill so far as it went, but also in finding fault with it because it did not remedy every abuse. He admitted that there were many reforms needed that were not dealt with in the Bill; but he held that this question of valuation was one so important, so large, and so complex that it deserved and demanded a measure to itself and consideration by itself. That was the attitude in which the Government regarded the question, and in which the Government would deal with it when the time came. Many criticisms had been passed on the arrangements made for the control of the police. It had been suggested that the control of the police should be left in the hands of the Quarter Sessions. Another suggestion was that the police should be placed under the control of the Home Office, and another that they should be placed absolutely in the hands of the Council. He would address himself to that question not as a Member of the Government, or as a Member of the House, but as one who would like to be a member of a future County Council and as one who is now a member of Quarter Sessions; and he had no hesitation in saying that, as a magistrate, he should resent it much, and he thought with justice, if he found himself on his County Council in the position of having to receive a demand from his brother magistrates, who had not taken the same trouble as he had to get on the Council, to pay a certain sum of money for a certain purpose without having any control over it. He therefore thought it would be a great mistake to leave the police with Quarter Sessions alone. The proposal of the Government was, he admitted, a compromise; but they held that the magistrates in their capacity as keepers of law and order were brought directly into connection with the police, and therefore ought, at all events, to have a share in the control of the police, and that the elective body who were to pay for and provide the police ought also to have a share in their control. Therefore it was that they had proposed that the control of the police should be vested in a joint committee. He believed that proposal to be the best one under the circumstances, and if it became law he believed that not only would there be no friction between the different sections of that committee, but also that the police would be administered in a satisfactory manner. With regard to the delegation of certain powers to the County Council, which were now vested in Government Departments, he believed there need be no apprehension on that point. He thought it would be found that there was ample protection in the interest of the public, and if any attempt were made to transfer powers which ought not to be transferred, the attention of the House would, he was sure, be very promptly drawn to the matter. Perhaps the most serious objection to the measure was the exclusion of the Poor Law. It was said that the Government had gone a certain distance and were afraid to go further. He admitted at once that there was a great deal to be said on the part of those who contended that the Poor Law should be included; but he appealed to hon. Gentlemen who had studied this question of Local Government whether in their hearts they did not think the Government acted wisely in not overloading the measure? The Poor Law was the most important part of our administration. The House must remember that it was proposed by this Bill to bring about what the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had rightly described as a revolution in the local government of this country. They were creating new authorities and a new form of government, and whatever might be the result of their plan, whether to bring into office men who had already occupied similar offices under a different condition of things, or to put new men into new posts, he thought that it must be admitted by all who had the good of their country and not any particular crochet at heart that the Government were wise in pausing before they put the heaviest and most responsible part of all upon these new Authorities. There was the great and complicated question of boundaries, and in connection with this he had been glad to hear the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Fellowes) say that he approved of the proposal which the Government had introduced into their Bill for dealing with this question. It was a very difficult one, and by no means the least thorny of those questions which were dealt with by this Bill, and he thought that it would be admitted that, before proposing to confer the powers of the Poor Law upon the new Authorities, it would be advisable to bring within the county boundaries all the areas necessary for Poor Law government, and to put right all the defects which would throw difficulties in the way. If there was a desire that the Poor Law should be added to the duties already conferred by this Bill on the new Authorities, it would be an inducement to them, by proceeding at once promptly to deal with the boundary question and rearrange the boundaries in counties, so as to make it a comparatively simple thing for Poor Law reform to follow the other reforms. Speaking, not as a Member of the Government, but as an agricultural Member, he recognized not only the ability apparent in the speech of the preceding night of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), but also the fairness of the right hon. Gentleman's views towards those interests which he himself represented, and which the right hon. Gentleman did not pretend to represent. For his own part, he did not consider that speech as having been an attack upon the relief which the Government were giving to the agricultural interest, but rather as a speech directed towards securing an altered condition of things for the large municipal boroughs affected by this Bill. Reading the speech in that light, it was essentially one which could only be answered by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Department to which he had the honour to belong, and he had no doubt that before this debate came to an end the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would deal with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and for his own part he would be much surprised, and he thought many hon. Members would be surprised, if the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill did not show the House and the country that, however able and fair might have been the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the figures dealt with in it had been remarkable rather more for inaccuracy than for accuracy. That, however, he merely stated as his own opinion, and it would be for the House to decide. With regard to the speech of the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), the hon. Member had been long and honourably distinguished for the interest he had taken in this question of Local Government Reform. The hon. Member had condemned the Bill for three points. In the first place, because it did not proceed to simplify the areas; secondly, that they had not proceeded to a division of rates between owner and occupier; and, thirdly, that there was not sufficient limitation of borrowing powers. With respect to the first point, he thought that the hon. Member hardly did justice to the Bill. He thought that the hon. Member would find that there was more in that direction in the Bill than he gave the Government credit for. With respect to the division of rates, it must be remembered that it would be an innovation in our municipal boroughs and a change not in the direction in which the Government, whether rightly or wrongly, were proceeding—namely, to extend the benefits of the Municipal Corporations Act to the counties of England. As far as borrowing powers were concerned, he assured the hon. Member that if the limitations now contained in the Bill were not sufficiently strong, then the Government would make them stronger. A remarkable speech had been made by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), who said that while a democratic measure had been promised, the Bill upheld the privileges of a class, and that charge rested entirely upon the fact that the chairman of a County Council, as he was to be a Justice of the Peace, was to be qualified to be a Justice of the Peace. As in a borough a Mayor was qualified to act as a Justice of the borough, it was thought that the chairman of a County Council ought to exercise the same privilege, and therefore this Bill conferred upon him that position, but required that he should of necessity have the qualification. And it was this that was to condemn the measure as one lacking in democratic character, brought in solely in the interests of the privileged classes. The hon. Member also said that the author of the measure had the ghosts of the country squires before him. Well, he (Mr. Long) belonged to that much-abused class, but he did not suppose that his right hon. Friend had suffered from ghosts, either in the solid shape which he possessed or in any other shape; he was certain the country squires did not exercise any undue influence over him. The Bill was not drawn in the interests of the squires, or any other class in the community. No one class was favoured more than another. It was a democratic Bill, as any Bill dealing with the subject must be under this democratic Constitution and in this democratic country. The Government that attempted to bring in a measure of a different character would be laughed at for its pains. Whatever might be its fate, it was, he thought, the framework of a good practical measure; and all that was asked was that it might receive fair and impartial consideration, apart from Party politics, and be approached with a desire to confer real benefit on the ratepayers of the country. He was not afraid of any charges of class privilege brought against it in this House, because the facts would speak for themselves out of it.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON (Devon, South Molton) said, that as one who took an active part in the transaction of county business, he might be allowed to put before the House and his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) a few points in connection with the Bill. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) dealt, he thought, somewhat unfairly with the objection which was raised by his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) with regard to the qualification of the chairmen of the future County Councils. The Mayor of a borough was not necessarily a Justice of the Peace when he was Mayor; but, in fact, in his position as Mayor he was a borough magistrate.

MR. LONG said, that was exactly what he stated. In boroughs the Mayor is a magistrate, but no qualification is necessary for a borough magistrate. In the counties, a man, in order to be a magistrate, must have the qualification prescribed for a Justice of the Peace. It was proposed in the Bill that it should be necessary for the chairman of the County Council, who is to be *ex officio* a Justice of the Peace, to hold the qualification of a Justice of the Peace in a county.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON said, he did not think the point was very important, one way or the other, and therefore he put it to the Government that they might give way upon it and agree that the chairman of the County Council should not necessarily have been made, previous to his appointment, a county magistrate, but should stand precisely in the same position as a mayor of a borough. Now, with the permission of the House, he would address a few words to them upon the question of police, and he thought in considering the Bill they were bound to bear in mind, not only the powers and privileges which the Bill conferred, but also the privileges which the Bill permitted to exist. He personally did not wish to raise any objection to or to quarrel in any way with the decision on the part of the Government not to interfere with the existing Poor Law system; but he could not help thinking that there might exist in the future some feeling of jealousy between the popularly elected representatives and the magistrates who were nominated representatives, and therefore he felt it would have been a very desirable thing, if it could have been done, for the Government to have brought in a Bill simultaneously with this Bill, for purging the character of the county magistracy. He did not say, for one moment, that the county magistrates had not done their duty honestly, fearlessly, effectually, and efficiently; but he thought that a Bill ought to be passed which would prevent magistrates being appointed who had not attained a reasonable age of discretion, so that the large powers which were still to be left in the hands of the magistrates should not be wielded in the future by very young men indeed; and he also thought that reasonable attendance should be insisted upon as a qualification for remaining on the Commission of the Peace. Having said this, he desired to turn to the various points which had been raised in connection with the police. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton) suggested that this would be a good opportunity to make the police an Imperial force. He (Viscount Lymington) did not suppose that any Government, Liberal or Conservative, could ever listen to a suggestion of that kind. He could not imagine what the life of a Home Secretary would be, if he had to answer for the misconduct, or supposed misconduct, not only of the Metropolitan Police—and the Home Office did not find that a very easy or pleasant task—but of the police in all parts of the country. Having regard to considerable experience as member of the police committee in his own county, he was bound to confess he did not believe in the divided jurisdiction which the Bill proposed to set up. Great powers were still reserved to the magistrates. Their judicial functions were still retained, and the business of Petty Sessions must place them in constant communication with the police. The magistrates were to have the selection of the Chief Constable, the Chief Constable who had enormous powers of initiation—to whom the whole of the police force looked to as its chief, and who could give a colour and direction to the police force itself. What he was particularly anxious to know was whether the elected magistrates were to be allowed to serve upon the proposed Police Committee; because if they were, the result would be precisely the same as if the management of the police were confined exclusively to a committee of magistrates. He did not believe that any proposal would be satisfactory which did not leave the complete control of the police to the magistrates, whose conduct would not depend upon popular approval or popular excitement. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) had stated the hardship he, as a magistrate, and others might feel who were returned to a County Board as elected representatives, at finding a non-representative body dealing with a county rate. But that rate—the police rate—as compared with other rates, represented a very small sum; in the county with which he was connected, it represented only 2*d.* in the £. But he did not think that was a financial question; the question whether they were in favour of putting the administrative control of the police entirely in the hands of the magistrates or entirely in the hands of elected representatives, almost wholly depended on other arguments. He, himself, believed that questions might arise—questions upon which political and popular public feeling might be very high and very strong, upon which the question of the administration of the law might be attended with extreme difficulty, and where those who controlled the police should be persons absolutely free from any sort of what he might call unfair popular pressure. Administration would be less likely to be impartial when dependent upon popular approval and popular excitement. He knew that in most large towns there was this popular control; but large towns were exempt from the changes proposed by the Bill, and this did not affect his opinion, that if the county police force was to be efficiently administered, if it was to be guided with secrecy, determination, and effect, it must be governed entirely by one authority, and he believed you could only have that authority as it existed now under the magistrates. There was another point in connection with the subject. Under the Bill, a sum of £1,378,000 was to be collected for licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors, and for gamedealers licences; these licences would be collected by the County Authorities, and handed over to the County Treasurer, and it seemed to him, from his practical experience of county management, that one of the first things to which a County Board would look would be the curtailment, as best they could, of the expenses of a staff of officials, and one of the first things likely to suggest itself to them would be that the police should be made use of as collectors of these licences. [Mr. RITCHIE: They do not collect now.] No, but was it not likely, probable even, that a proposition would be made that the police should be used for that purpose? He was not speaking of taxes that were to be collected by Inland Revenue officers, and which after being collected by them, were to be handed over to the County Authorities; but he was speaking of gamedealers' licences, and licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors to be collected by the County Authorities themselves. It was extremely likely that the County Councils would wish that these licences should be collected by the police. If they did that for the sake of economy, and for saving a double set of officials, it was another reason why the police should be under one jurisdiction, instead of a divided jurisdiction. Another point upon which all would agree had reference to the borrowing powers of the new County Authorities. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) had laid great stress on the extravagance of democratic authorities in the United States, and the large amount of the municipal debt there. The municipal debt of the United States, he need hardly remind the House, had increased, from 1870 to 1880, over 60 per cent—from over £103,000,000 to over £164,000,000; and the pointed question suggested itself—were the proposals recommended, the precautions in the Bill adopted by the President of the Local Government Board, sufficient—were they adequate to meet the contingency of future extravagance? To what did his right hon. Friend's guarantee and security amount in that direction? He proposed that the total debt of the County Council should not exceed two years' annual value of the rateable property in the county, and that the Local Government Board should be obliged to institute an inquiry before sanctioning a loan which, with the already existing debt, would exceed the amount of a year's annual rateable value. That was to say, the Local Government Board would have the power of a direct prohibition, and was not to be allowed by Parliament, under any conditions, to agree to any fresh loan where the debt of the county would amount to two years' income from the rateable value of the property, and the Local Government Board had a *locus standi* to institute an inquiry where the loan amounted to one year's rateable value. The whole point rested upon the question, were those sums a fair and sufficient proportion? He maintained, from his experience, that the debt of a county bore no proportion to two years' or to one year's annual rateable value, and he, therefore, hoped that in Committee the President of the Local Government Board would cut down the amount, or impose some other check for meeting the difficulty. No doubt, the principle of the safeguard under the Bill was the discretion of the Local Government Board; but if, as he contended, one year's annual rateable value was a very large proportion, as it existed now, to the debt of the county, he did not think that County Authorities should have a sort of power or a claim conceded to them that they could create a debt even up to that amount. Another point which had already been dwelt upon was whether population should be the sole basis of electoral districts. He hoped that the Government would agree to the necessity of a discretion being allowed, in the determination of the boundaries of the electoral districts, to other considerations, such as acreage and rateable value. If the Government insisted upon population being the sole basis of electoral districts, then they must meet with a great deal of opposition from those gentlemen who represented purely agricultural constituencies. Happily, for many agricultural counties, large towns of over 100,000 inhabitants in the 1881 census were taken out of the operation of the Bill. As the Bill stood, large areas with considerable rateable value, which were thinly or sparsely populated, would be almost disfranchised under the proposals of the Bill. There might be some difficulty in meeting the point raised by the hon.

Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse) by giving a vote to property; but that might be met, as well as the question of residence, by giving directions that in drawing out electoral districts, attention should be given to acreage as well as population. He thanked the House for their attention to these remarks, which he had not intended as anything in the nature of a speech, but to draw the attention of the Government to a few points upon which he felt strongly, and which had come within his experience of county business. He hoped the Government would consider them in the friendly spirit in which they were presented.

MR. S. HOARE (Norwich) said, he would only ask the indulgence of the House for a few minutes. Even if he had more time at his disposal, he would not venture to address the House at length, nor was it necessary at that stage to go into details. In the first place, he wished to express entire concurrence with the remarks of the Secretary to the Local Government Board in reference to the dual control of the police. He believed that, under the circumstances, it was the only method of meeting the difficulties in the management of the police. Like his hon. Friend, he anticipated no friction in the arrangement by which Quarter Sessions would have part control. But the point to which he specially desired to call attention was that referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), as regarded the position of certain large boroughs with large populations, and which were not in the Schedule as separate counties by themselves. The right hon. Gentleman based his argument on financial grounds principally; but he (Mr. Hoare) would venture to speak for one of those great boroughs, not from that point of view, but rather from the point of view of securing the better working of the scheme. If the President of the Local Government Board would favourably consider the suggestion, the working of the Bill in the County of Norfolk and the Eastern districts would be much smoother. He alluded to his own constituency. The City of Norwich, the capital of East Anglia, had a population of not quite 100,000, but still so large that in a very few years, at the rate of present increase, that figure would be passed. The city had a larger number of electors than some of the boroughs of 100,000 inhabitants; its register showed 18,636 Municipal voters, it covered 7,500 acres of ground, and it had 75 miles of streets to look after. He could not help thinking that to associate a large city like that with the county would inevitably give rise to friction. When he said that at the Quarter Sessions of the County of Norfolk no voice was raised in support of the union of the city with the county for any purpose, and when he said that the Chamber of Agriculture had unanimously voted that the city should remain separate, then he felt sure that the position of this important borough would meet with the consideration of the Government. He might mention another point, as indicating a special reason why the union of city and county would be liable to give rise to friction. From time immemorial Norwich had been accepted as a county of its own; repeated charters had treated it as a county by itself. It had its own Assizes, its own Quarter Sessions, Court of Record, lunatic asylum, and Poor Law Union. All its organizations were entirely independent of the county, and he, therefore, expressed his earnest hope that when the matter was fully considered it would be thought that a great city like this, with a population of one-fourth of the whole county, would be allowed, in the future, the management of its own affairs. One old charter acknowledged that the City of Norwich had been a county from a time when the memory of man went not to the contrary. He hoped the Bill would not interfere with its independence, but would merely renew the words of the old charter and allow Norwich to remain a county independent of the County of Norfolk for ever.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Courtney*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, AND PATHWAYS (WALES) BILL.—[BILL 129.]

(*Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Bowen Rowlands.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the object of it was to secure public right of access to the mountains and waste lands in Wales, and also to the rivers, lakes, and streams. It provided that any pathway that had been used for any five successive years during the last 49 years should be again used by the public. There was every safeguard in the Bill for the rights of landowners and tenants. He hoped that the House would be able to give a second reading to the Bill, and that any Amendment considered necessary might be made in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Mr. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.) said, the Bill began with a recital which, he ventured to think, was certainly not founded upon fact. It began by stating that, "whereas, according to ancient Welsh tradition, certain mountains and lakes were free and open." He ventured to say there were no such traditions worthy of any kind of consideration as was suggested with regard to these; they were simple fancy, and had no foundation in fact of any sort or kind. The Bill then went on to speak of access to uncultivated land, rivers, lakes, streams, and ancient pathways. With regard to the use by the public of the so-called uncultivated mountain land a great question might arise as to what was really uncultivated mountain land, because some lands might be considered uncultivated, although they were cultivated to the greatest possible extent they were capable of. Some of those mountains could only be used for certain purposes; they were high land, and their general use was for sheep-walking. They were fenced in, and therefore the first principle of cultivation was advanced; but, then, what else was done? A person who understood how to deal with the sheep walks properly, regularly cut the heather every year, so that it might grow again, for it was not the longest heather which was good for the sheep, but the young shoots which sprang up when it was cut. In the same manner the fern was cut, and the young shoots were eaten by the sheep. If that were not done, no sheep could possibly exist and thrive on the place. Was not that cultivation? It seemed to him that it was so, and that that was the only kind of cultivation the mountain lands were capable of. The Preamble went on to say that the doubts about the access to these places checked the visitors to Wales. He should be very sorry to do or say anything to check the visitors coming to Wales, but then the Bill went on to say that such doubts tended to the detriment of the residents. He would like to know what residents? If it really meant the lodging-house keepers he could understand that they might wish to have people coming to fill their houses, who would overrun the country, and do as much mischief as they possibly could. He could not understand how any other residents could possibly benefit by allowing people to come in vast numbers and overrun the mountains and lakes, to the detriment of the owners of the mountain land, and particularly of the occupiers. It appeared to him that, so far as the tenants of the land were concerned, who desired to keep their sheep undisturbed, especially in certain seasons, lambing time, and so on, great injury would be done to them if these people were allowed to overrun the land. He therefore ventured to think that that part of the recital was wrong. The Bill then went on to provide that—

> "From and after the passing of this Act, the public shall have free right to enter upon, and access to, mountain land, moor, or waste land, and access to and walk along the bed or bank of any river, stream or lake, and ride in any boat upon any river or lake for the purpose of recreation, or winberry gathering, or scientific research."

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned till *Friday* next.

Debate to be resumed upon *Friday* next.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 154.]

(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Amendment of Factory and Workshops Act, 1878).

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he had an Amendment he proposed to make to meet the objections of certain hon. Gentlemen connected with manufacturing constituencies. He proposed to omit from "such day" in line 4, page 2, to "each year" in line 6, and to insert the words "such two whole days in each year separated by an interval of not less than three months."

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 4, leave out from "such day" to "each year," in line 6 inclusive, and insert "such two whole days in each year separated by an interval of not less than three months."—(*Sir George Trevelyan.*)

Amendment *agreed to;* words *substituted.*

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN moved, as an Amendment, to omit, in line 8, "and local authorities," and, in line 6, to omit from "in boroughs," to "or," in line 7, inclusive, and to insert the words "police commissioners in boroughs or parochial board."

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 8, to leave out "and local authorities," and in line 6, to leave out from "in boroughs" to "or" in line 7 inclusive, and to insert the words "Police Commissioners in boroughs or the parochial board,"—(*Sir George Trevelyan.*)

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Will the right hon. Gentleman explain the effect of the Amendment?

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, the effect would be to specify who were the Local Authorities in counties and boroughs, and he proposed to name as those authorities the police commissioners or the parochial board in counties and towns. It would then read—

"On such day in the month of August in each year as shall be fixed by the magistrates or police commissioners in boroughs or the parochial board in counties and towns."

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the parochial boards in Scotland would be a very unsuitable authority for the Workshops Act.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: What authority would the right hon. and learned Gentleman suggest?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I should prefer time to consider.

Amendment by leave *withdrawn.*

Clause as amended, *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday* next.

MOTIONS.

WEEKLY WAGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Fenwick, Bill to provide for Weekly Payment of Wages in Great Britain and Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Burt, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Randell, and Mr. De Cobain.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 208.]

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE EXPENSES (No. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Bill to amend the Law in regard to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. A. Gathorne-Hardy, and Mr. M'Lagan.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 209.]

LIVERY FRANCHISE (LONDON) ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Firth, Bill to abolish the Livery Franchise in the City of London, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Firth, Mr. Causton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 210.]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—SPECIAL REPORT.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

Sir John Mowbray accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following Fifteen Members in respect of the County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*]:—Mr. Ambrose, Mr. Chance, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Darling, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Gully, Mr. Charles Hall, Sir Henry James, Mr. Milvain, Mr. Robert Reid, Sir Albert Rollit, and Sir George Russell.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock, till *Monday* next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 16*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) (64).

Second Reading—Army (Annual) * (55); Copyhold Acts Amendment (6); East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) (56).

Provisional Order Bill—*Committee—Report*—Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint).*

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL, in presenting a Bill for the abatement of smoke in the Metropolis, said, it was the same Bill as the Bill of last year, with some modifications suggested by the Report of the Select Committe on the subject.

Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis.—*Presented* (The Lord Stratheden and Campbell).

Bill read 1ª. (No. 64.)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—SUSPENSION BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE.—QUESTION.

Lord HERSCHELL asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he proposed to lay on the Table any Papers relating to the suspension by the Governor of Western Australia of the Chief Justice of that Colony; and what steps Her Majesty's Government intended to take in the case of so serious an interference by the Executive with the Judiciary.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Lord Knutsford), in reply, said, he was unable to give his noble and learned Friend any information with reference to the first part of his Question. According to a Paper presented to Parliament in June, 1870, on the removal and suspension of Colonial Judges, it appeared that the practice was to refer such matters to the Privy Council. In deference to that opinion, he had obtained the assent of the Lord President of the Council (Viscount Cranbrook) to refer the case to a Committee of the Privy Council, and that Committee would sit for the first time on Wednesday next.

Lord HERSCHELL asked if there was any objection to give the names of the Members of the Committee?

Lord KNUTSFORD said, the Committee would consist of the Lord President of the Council, Lord Macnaghten, and himself.

LAW AND JUSTICE—CRIMINAL TRIALS—PROOF OF PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord COLERIDGE, in asking the Lord Chancellor, Whether there would be any objection to direct that in all cases where a previous conviction has to be proved, some person who has had the prisoner actually under his care in gaol should be present to prove it, said, he would mention shortly the circumstances which had induced him to put the Question on the Paper. Last Circuit a man was tried before him for some small offence at Gloucester, and was further indicted for having been previously convicted. On the question arising as to the previous conviction, the prisoner insisted that he had never been convicted before. The prosecution called a member of the Metropolitan Police to prove the prisoner's identity, and he said that he recognized the prisoner as a convicted offender, but admitted that he had only been in his custody for half-an-hour three years ago. He was impressed with the prisoner's honesty with regard to this point, and directed the jury that if the prisoner had been two or three months in a Metropolitan prison, some warder should have been sent to identify him, and he was not found guilty of having been previously convicted. He afterwards sent for a Report to the London prison where the prisoner was said to have been confined, and found that the man whom the policeman swore was the prisoner had different coloured eyes and hair, was two and a-half inches taller than him, and had a mark on the arm which the prisoner did not bear. It was perfectly plain that a mistake had been made, and it was one which might have had very serious consequences for the prisoner. He was informed that a man had been sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude, just previously, at Gloucester for some small offence, merely because a previous conviction was proved. The same might have happened in the case he tried, had it come before the same Judge. This was an important matter, and he trusted his noble and learned Friend would be able to give a satisfactory assurance with regard to it.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, there could be no doubt that, in the case brought forward by the noble and learned Lord, the prisoner was entitled to his acquittal on the ground that there was not sufficient evidence to justify his conviction for having been previously convicted. Speaking generally, in every case of alleged previous conviction, something like adequate proof ought to be given. With reference to the suggestion in the Question, he thought it would be inconvenient to lay down any strict rule in those terms, but he had communicated with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the subject. While, on the one hand, his right hon. Friend was quite prepared to recommend that, whenever application was made, some warder or other person who had had the prisoner in his custody should be sent to identify him, yet, he considered it would be inconvenient and not consistent with the interests of the Public Service to lay down a general rule that some person who had had the prisoner in custody must attend the trial. There were many cases in which some person knew the prisoner, other than a wardor, and in those cases it would be inconvenient that a warder should be brought from the gaol when persons more easily accessible were able to prove the previous conviction. His right hon. Friend had every wish to meet the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord in the spirit in which it was made, and would do everything in his power to insure that the proper evidence as to identity of prisoners should be forthcoming.

COPYHOLD ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

(NO. 6.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord HOBHOUSE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to enact certain clauses which were in the Bill of last year as it left the Select Committee to which it was referred, and as it was passed by the House, but which, by a mere accident in the House of Commons, were dropped out then. They affected the Stamp Duties, and therefore had to pass through a Committee. It was the purest formality, because the Treasury had assented, and the same clauses had passed through Committee in two previous years. Still it was necessary, and it was overlooked until too late. The clauses in question enabled a copyholder, after the amount of compensation had been settled by agreement, to have a memorandum of enfranchisement entered in the Court Roll, which should have all the effect of an award by the Land Commissioners. When the Bill got into Committee, he proposed to move Amendments which would have the effect of substituting for the existing scale of compensation to stewards, the scale settled by the Incorporated Law Society and adopted by the Select Committee last year. The stewards had been surprised, and felt aggrieved, by the alteration of that scale in the House; and they protested against new duties being thrown upon them at the same rate of remuneration. The present Bill would give them some new duties, and it would very much enlarge the range of cases to which the statutory scale would apply. The Law Society's scale effected a substantial reduction upon the former rate of charge, though it, again, was higher than the scale enacted in 1857. As it was now proposed to enlarge the range of duties for fixed payments, he thought it was fair to reconsider the then action of the House.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

Earl DE LA WARR said, he understood that, as regarded the stewards' charges and fees, the Bill restored the Schedule agreed to by the Committee of their Lordships' House last year. He would not, therefore, oppose the Bill after the noble Lord's undertaking to provide thus for the proper remuneration of the stewards.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, he wished to point out that although the 1st clause made it clear that the stewards' compensation was to be paid before the memorandum of enfranchisement was handed over to the tenant, it was silent with regard to the lord's compensation, which he was left to recover as best he could. He was quite sure that this was not the intention of the noble and learned Lord.

Lord HOBHOUSE thought the Amendments which he would introduce would be sufficient to meet the views of noble Lords.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

EAST INDIA (PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS) BILL.

(*The Viscount Cross.*)

(NO. 56.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Viscount Cross), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the Government had undertaken to pay 5 per cent on £4,000,000 of capital of the Oude and Rohilkund Railway Company for 999 years, but had the option of buying the railway at the end of 20 years. The cost to the country at the present time was 28 lakhs of rupees, but the Government hoped to be able to borrow money at such a rate as would reduce this charge to 22 lakhs, or even less, so that there would be a clear gain of six lakhs a year. The price of this railway was to be fixed at the average price of the stock for three years, and would be £5,036,000. There would be another saving, for, of course, the Government would have to take the liabilities of the Company, and the debentures could be paid off and the money borrowed at a cheaper rate. Thus a further saving of about 3½ lakhs could be effected. The Government also proposed to obtain borrowing powers to the extent of £10,000,000 for the purpose of further railway construction, or the repayment of existing debentures, to carry out the policy recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1884, for the purpose of enabling Railway Companies to borrow at a lower rate than they did at present. The Government would not give any guarantee, but would lend money to the Companies at a cheaper rate than they would be able to borrow it in the open market.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

Earl BEAUCHAMP asked whether Clause 4 related to new railways or only to those already in existence?

Viscount CROSS said, it related also to new railways, and was intended to enable the Government to raise money to lend to the Companies.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he wished to express his entire approval of the principle of the Bill. It would carry out a policy which had long been desired.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

SAVING OF LIFE AT SEA (USE OF OIL FOR CALMING ROUGH SEAS).

MOTION FOR RETURNS.

Moved for,

1. "Copy of any report or memorandum of the Board of Trade calling attention to a memorandum issued by the Board of Admiralty on the use of oil at sea for modifying the effects of breaking waves.

2. Copy of Circular Letter of the Admiralty, of 1st December, 1884, No. 3,206-8,305.

3. Copy of a Report of Captain Chetwynd, R.N., to the Committee of the Royal and National Life-boat Institution, 30th September, 1884, referred to in those reports."—(*The Lord Cottesloe.*)

The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (The Earl of Onslow) said, there would be no objection to furnish these Returns.

Motion *agreed to.*

Returns ordered to be laid before the House.

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 16th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Lanark (Mid Division), *v.* Stephen Mason, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Third Night*], *debate further adjourned;* Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment [131], *debate adjourned.*

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) [118].

Committee — Report — Third Reading — Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act (1878) Amendment* [189], and *passed.*

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment [157], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

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TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS ACT, 1887 —THE REGULATIONS.

Mr. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can state when the Regulations to be made for Trustee Savings Banks under the Act of last Session will be laid before Parliament; and, whether he will ensure their appearance at the same time as the Regulations to be framed for the Post Office Savings Banks?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): A draft of Regulations to be made by the Treasury and Postmaster General, under the Trustee Savings Bank Act of last Session, has been prepared; and the Treasury are considering how far such Regulations should be made applicable to Trustee Banks within the limits defined by the Act. It is intended to lay the two sets of Regulations before Parliament at the same time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE TOLL GATE TAX, SOUTH WALES.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is intended that in South Wales, where toll gates still exist, vehicles using the roads shall be subjected to payment of the Toll Gate Tax in addition to the proposed tax on wheels and horses; and, whether, if the tax on wheels and horses is persevered with, he will insert in the Local Government Bill a clause to abolish the toll gates, in order that those who use vehicles and horses on those roads may not be practically compelled to pay twice over for the use of the roads?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) (who replied) said: There will be no exemption from the payment of the proposed taxes on wheels and horses in South Wales, although tolls are still levied on turnpike roads there. If there is any general desire that the Acts relating to the levy of these tolls in South Wales should be repealed, and the provisions of the Highway and Locomotives Acts Amendment Act of 1878 made applicable, and an Amendment to that effect is moved when the Local Government Bill is in Committee, the proposal will be fully considered by the Government with the desire of meeting the wishes of those locally interested. This reply will also meet the Question of the hon. Member for South Glamorgan (Mr. Arthur Williams).

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS — CONTRACTS FOR PUBLIC PRINTING.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the firms who have obtained contracts for public printing also supply paper; what is the price charged per 1 lb. for the various qualities of paper used; whether the prices which are charged to purchasers of public papers represent the price of paper, ink, and machining alone, or a part of the cost of "setting up" is included; and, what is the price per 1 lb. obtained for waste paper?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): None of the firms holding Government printing contracts, with a few unimportant and special exceptions, now supply paper also under their contracts. Printing paper is obtained at 2¼*d* to 2½*d*. per 1 lb., writing paper from 3½*d*. upwards, according to quality. The prices charged to purchasers of Parliamentary Papers cover the cost of paper and striking off copies, and under the present contracts would, perhaps, yield a slight amount towards the cost of "setting up," if the number of copies to be sold could be correctly conjectured. It is difficult to give figures as to the price obtained for waste paper; but I may say that 188 tons sold last month realized £6 2*s*. 6*d*. a-ton on the average. Occasional lots have fetched as much as £15 a-ton.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE LEASEHOLD CLAUSE — LEASEHOLDERS IN THE LAND COURTS.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that, under the Leasehold Clause of the Irish Land Law Act of 1887, a very large number of leases have been broken in the northern part of County Antrim, and consequently that there are numerous cases awaiting hearing in the Land Courts; and, whether, having regard to the way in which such delay presses injuriously on the many tenants suffering from the long-continued agricultural depression, the Government will seek to make arrangements for early and adequate sittings of the Land Court at Ballymoney?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me it is a fact that a large number of leaseholders in the County Antrim have, under the Act of last Session, become entitled to apply to have judicial rents fixed, and that the applications awaiting hearing are consequently numerous. A Sub-Commission sat in that county during the months of February and March. The Commissioners are not at present in a position to state when a Sub-Commission will again sit at Ballymoney or elsewhere in the county, but they will make the fixture at the earliest date practicable.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) — SALMON FISHING—FISHING RIGHTS IN THE SPEY.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware that the Duke of Richmond and Gordon nets the River Spey, in Morayshire, from the mouth to Orton Bridge, from 6 a.m. on Monday to 6 p.m. on Saturday in each week during the salmon season, including 13 miles of non-tidal water; whether the netting is carried on by night as well as day, and in such a way that the upper waters of the River are almost entirely denuded of fresh run fish; whether the Duke of Richmond also nets the sea coast for several miles adjacent to the mouth of the Spey; whether fishermen in the Moray Firth who take a salmon in their nets are prohibited from landing the same; and, if so, under what law this prohibition exists; whether these rights were obtained by grant from the Crown, or how otherwise; and, if any, and what, consideration was paid for them; and, whether the Government propose to deal with these and similar rights in their Scotch Fishery Bill; and, if not, will the Government consent to an inquiry into the nature of these and other salmon rights, with a view to ascertaining whether their continuance is in the public interest?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Salmon fishing is carried on by day and night at the places referred to, the extent of non-tidal water being eight and nine miles. It is not a fact that the upper waters are denuded of fish. As to the fourth Question, I have to refer the hon. Member to 7 & 8 *Vict.*, c. 95; 25 & 26 *Vict.*, c. 97; and 31 & 32 *Vict.*, c. 123. The proprietor's rights were obtained by purchase from different proprietors, and not from the Crown. The Bill to be brought in by Her Majesty's Government is for the purpose of regulating and protecting fisheries, and not for interfering with property. There is no need for an inquiry into the nature of salmon rights, which are perfectly well and legally defined.

Mr. ANDERSON inquired, whether the right of netting salmon in tidal waters had been obtained from the Crown or from private proprietors; and, whether the Acts of Parliament which the Lord Advocate cited prevented fishermen who took salmon outside the mile limit from landing them?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the hon. Gentleman could ascertain for himself what the Acts contained. As to the rights of the present proprietors, they obtained them all from individuals, and not from the Crown. All salmon fisheries, whether in the tidal or fresh waters, must in every case have been obtained from the Crown, the Crown being Trustee for the nation of all salmon fishings.

SCOTLAND — THE CROFTER COMMISSIONERS — ASSIGNMENT OF ADDITIONAL LAND TO HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, with reference to complaints by Highland Crofters that no additional lands in the form of extended holdings have been assigned to them by the Crofter Commissioners, there has been, as promised by him, any communication between the Secretary for Scotland and the Crofter Commissioners on the subject; whether, if there has been Correspondence, he will lay a Copy upon the

Table of the House, or state its import; and, whether steps are to be taken with the view of amending the Crofters' Act of 1885, so as to make it more effective for carrying out the intentions of Parliament in regard to the enlargement of Crofters' Holdings?

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Crofter Commissioners have reported on the cause of the provisions of the Act of 1886, for the enlargement of crofts, not having been put in operation?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): A Report has been received from the Crofter Commissioners on this subject, which is now in the printer's hands, and, it is hoped, will be issued in a few days. It would be premature to answer the third paragraph of the Question before the Report has been considered by Her Majesty's Government.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND) — EDINBURGH POST OFFICE — APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the son of an important official in the Post Office at Edinburgh, has, since July, 1882, acted there as stationary clerk to the Surveyor of the Midland District of Scotland, and occasionally as surveyor's clerk for the same district; whether, at the time when the vacancy occurred in the stationary clerkship in 1882, he held any, and, if so, what appointment; whether an opportunity was given to other officers to apply for the vacant post; whether he has also, since July, 1882, until a few weeks ago, been on the staff of the Falkirk Office as a sorting clerk; whether he has ever done any duty at Falkirk; and, if so, for how long; whether he drew salary for both offices, and has done so since July, 1882; whether he was recently transferred from Falkirk to a more lucrative post in the Dundee Office; whether he is to hold and be paid for both the Edinburgh and Dundee appointments; and, if so, in which he is to do full duty; and, whether such arrangements are in conformity with the Rules of the Service?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The officer referred to by the hon. Member has acted as stationary clerk to the Surveyor of the Midland District of Scotland since July, 1882; and he has also been once employed for a short time in travelling duties as surveyor's clerk in the district. It is the Rule that surveyors' stationary clerks must be selected from the staff of Provincial Post Offices; and at the time this officer was selected he held the appointment of sorting clerk and telegraphist at Falkirk. He is now borne upon the establishment of the Post Office at Dundee. No opportunity was given to other officers to apply for the vacancy, as it was not then customary to adopt that course; but the Rules governing the selection of officers of this class were altered in 1884. Vacancies are now notified to every post office in the district, and the Postmaster General selects from the candidates who offer themselves. I should explain that all officers acting as surveyors' stationary clerks receive a small annual allowance in addition to the pay proper to the establishment to which they belong, because the duties they perform are of a more important nature than those ordinarily assigned to clerks in Provincial Post Offices. What has been done did not, I am advised, infringe any Regulation of the Department.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR EWART.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the following statement made by Professor Ewart, a member of the Scotch Fishery Board, at Edinburgh, on 24th March:—

> "Since the Board had struggled into existence, it had been largely occupied in saying to demands made upon it, that it had no power or no money. He had been endeavouring for five long years to discover whether the Board had intended to be administrative or initiatory and practical; whether to administer the Fishery Laws or to improve the industry and its means of production. If it was only ordinary routine that the Board was to discharge, it might at once cease to exist;"

whether the views above expressed are shared by other members of the Board; and, whether the Government will introduce a measure for the purpose of placing the Scotch Fishery Board on a satisfactory basis, and enable it to have effective powers for the improvement and development of the fishing industry?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The quotation in the Question is substantially correct, and it is believed other members of the Board concur in the statements contained in it. Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to make any statement as to future policy; but the communications lately received are engaging their serious attention.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—MUSSEL BEDS.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement by Professor Ewart—

> "That mussels were in an unsatisfactory condition. There was, however, a possibility that they might be looked to, and that we might learn to cultivate them after the French system;"

whether the Government, in pursuance of their pledge given on the 12th day of May, 1887, have asked the Scotch Fishery Board to advise them as to whether anything should be done in regard to mussel beds, and what should be done; and, if the Government will state to what it is that Professor Ewart refers in the words above quoted?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The quotation in the first paragraph is correct. Her Majesty's Government have had investigations made, and have received Reports in regard to the present state of the mussel beds; and a special Report has been obtained from Professor Ewart in regard to the French system of cultivation, which is now before the Board for consideration. It is to the system organized in France that Professor Ewart refers.

MR. ANDERSON said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not answered the latter part of the Question.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD asked the hon. Member to repeat that portion of his Question another day.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY – SUPPLY OF FIELD GUNS.

MR. J. S. GATHORNE-HARDY (Kent, Medway) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will now find it possible to issue field guns to those Volunteer Artillery Corps which are not required for the defence of the military and commercial ports of the United Kingdom?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): As my hon. Friend is probably aware, we are in process of organizing 21 Volunteer batteries, armed with 40-pounders and 20-pounders. In addition to these, steps will shortly be taken to form a certain number of Volunteer batteries armed with 16-pounders. The exact number of batteries to be thus armed is at present undetermined, but we shall probably issue about 100 16-pounder guns.

LOTTERIES ACTS—THE CHURCH CONSERVATIVE CLUB LOTTERY.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the lottery tickets for the Church Conservative Club are still being openly sold in very large quantities in various parts of England; and, what steps, if any, have been taken by the Director of Public Prosecutions or Board of Inland Revenue since his previous answer on this matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Constable of Lancashire that after the Question asked in this House by the hon. Member on the 13th of March, the promoters of the lottery withdrew the advertisements and stopped the sale of tickets. Previously to that date the police had applied for summonses against the Secretary and other Members of the Club; and the Clerk to the Justices, having asked the Director of Public Prosecutions for advice, was advised that the lottery seemed to be illegal, and that the police had acted rightly. I understand that the proceedings were not carried further, because there was not enough evidence for conviction. I am informed by the Board of Inland Revenue that a licence for the sale of tobacco on the Club premises has been duly applied for. The Board, therefore, had no power to interfere further in the matter.

MR. BRADLAUGH inquired whether, if he furnished evidence that the tickets were still being sold in Maidstone, and that some were purchased last week, the right hon. Gentleman would see that proceedings were taken?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he had already informed the hon. Member that proceedings had been taken; but that the evidence was not sufficient to convict. If the hon. Member supplied the necessary evidence, the Local Authorities would no doubt act.

Mr. BRADLAUGH repeated that the sales were taking place at Maidstone, and said he would supply the evidence of it to the Home Office.

INLAND REVENUE (EXCISE) DEPARTMENT—APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in consequence of the recent economic changes in the Inland Revenue (Excise) Department having materially affected the promotion of the junior officers, the Government would take some permanent step, with a view to relieve the present stagnation and ensure an even flow of promotion in the future?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I am informed that such a step as that suggested in the Question could only be carried out at a cost which would, in great measure, absorb the saving effected in the Excise Service by recent changes; and the Government are not prepared to take any step in the direction indicated.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — ATTENDANCE AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS —THE RECENT ORDER OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that many of the police affected by the recent Order of the Chief Commissioner, have been attached to the House of Commons for long periods, in some cases extending to more than 20 years, and that many of them, in consideration of the position they have thus occupied, have had to forego all chance of promotion; and, if these statements are true, how it is proposed to compensate these men, who are of exemplary behaviour, and who will be injured by loss of pay and in other ways if the Order is carried into effect?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews (Birmingham, E.): There are, I am informed, not more than seven men who will be affected by the recent Order. Of these, some are nearly due for retirement on pension; some would, independently of the Order, have been taken off this duty; and some may be allowed to remain by special permission. The Chief Commissioner does not anticipate that any case of hardship will arise. If it should, the Chief Commissioner will give it full consideration.

ARMY—INVENTIONS IN EXPLOSIVES—A COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, having regard to the rapid progress of invention in high explosives, and the reported adoption of Mélinite as the explosive charge of all shells in the French Navy, he will at once form a Committee of Experts in Explosives, with a view of testing the safety, and trying the relative disruptive properties, of the high explosives known to exist at present, as compared with gunpowder, more particularly with regard to their effect on a target representing the unarmoured ends of a ship of the *Admiral* class?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): We are proposing to the Treasury the formation of a Standing Committee of Experts to test and advise upon explosives. This will, I think, completely meet the wish of my noble and gallant Friend, and it is a proposal to which we attach great importance.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SENTENCES BY COUNTY COURTS OF QUARTER SESSIONS—A RETURN.

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House, before the date to be fixed for Committee on the Local Government Bill, a Return, showing the number of sentences exceeding six months' hard labour passed by County Courts of Quarter Sessions in England and Wales during the year ended 31st December, 1887, distinguishing between sentences of imprisonment and of penal servitude, and classifying the sentences of penal servitude according to their duration?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: I shall be happy to grant the Return asked for; but it will take some little time to prepare, and I cannot promise it by any exact date.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) AND POLITICAL MEETINGS.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a letter was addressed by Colonel Turner's directions to the manager of a railway in the County of Clare, cautioning him against running special trains on Sunday, as they might be possibly used to subserve the objects of alleged illegal meetings; whether, in consequence, no trains were run on the railway on Sunday; and, whether there is anything in the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, or in any other Act, to authorize Colonel Turner to interfere with the traffic arrangements of Railway Companies; and, if not, whethe Government are prepared to compensate the Railway Company for the loss caused by the cessation of their traffic in consequence of this action on the part of Colonel Turner?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): It is the case that the Divisional Magistrate referred to caused, in accordance with the usual practice, a letter to be addressed to the traffic manager of a Railway Company in the County Clare, informing him of the contemplated holding of illegal meetings which had been duly proclaimed, and intimating that he did so in view of the possibility of special trains being engaged for the purpose of subserving or promoting such illegal meetings. I am not aware whether trains were or were not run on the railway on the occasion in question. The Divisional Magistrate did not act in the matter under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; nor can his action be described as an interference with the traffic arrangements of the Company.

MR. COX: What is the usual practice to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred? Can he cite a single instance where previously Railway Companies have been interfered with?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already informed the hon. Member that the Company was not interfered with. I am not aware of any previous interference.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—THE CAITHNESS MAILS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the case, that letters posted in the town of Castletown, Caithness, are delivered in London, a distance of 800 miles, before those for the neighbouring parishes of Canisbay, Bower, Watten, and Latheron; whether the passenger coaches running to Thurso have offered to take a midday mail, which would allow the delivery in the neighbouring parishes in 24 hours, for 2*s*. 6*d*. a-week; and, whether the Postal Authorities will accept the offer, or otherwise arrange for quicker delivery in the county?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): With regard to the first part of the Question put to me, I beg to state that the hon. Member has been misinformed, and that it is not the case that letters posted in Castletown, Caithness, are delivered in London earlier than in Canisbay, Bower, Watten, and Latheron. As to the employment of a passenger coach for the acceleration of local correspondence, I will have inquiry made whether any acceleration would be effected by such means; but I believe that the amount of the local correspondence is very insignificant.

THE GENERAL REGISTER AND RECORD OFFICE OF SHIPPING AND SEAMEN —TEMPORARY COPYISTS.

MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in view of the very great changes recommended by a reorganising Committee appointed to inquire into the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen, he will guarantee that the interests of temporary copyists of long and approved service will be duly considered; and, considering the fact that 13 out of a total of 19 were recommended for promotion, in accordance with terms of Treasury Minute of December, 1886, whether he will see that their positions, hitherto practically permanent (some having service in the office from terms of three to 15 years), shall not be interfered with until the whole question has been inquired into and reported on by the Royal Commission?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The recommendations of the Committee on the Seamen's Registry are now under consideration; but, without anticipating the decisions which may be taken upon them, I can say that it is our intention to find employment as copyists in other Government Offices for any copyists who may not be required hereafter in the Seamen's Registry.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—NATIONAL STOCKS—STATISTICS OF CONVERSION.

Mr. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will state the amount of National Stocks which have been converted subject to an allowance not exceeding 1*s.* 6*d.* per cent, with the total amount paid for such allowances; also the number of holders who converted Stock by sending in forms of assent without the intervention of an agent; the amount of stock so converted; and the consequent saving to the public Treasury by such action of the Stockholders?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; I am not in a position to give this information at the present moment. The work of conversion is not yet completed; and I am reluctant to add to the enormous labours of the Bank at the present moment by asking them to furnish figures giving the details of conversion up to the present time. I hope the House will allow me to take this opportunity of bearing my testimony—a testimony which is supported by what I hear on all sides—to the admirable manner in which the Bank of England have conducted the conversion. The rapidity, accuracy, and general ability with which they have carried through an operation of such enormous magnitude is beyond praise, and has been universally recognized in financial circles and by the public at large.

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—FUNDS FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRISONERS.

Mr. AUSTIN (York, W.R., Osgoldcross) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to a Memorial, sent to the Home Office in April, 1885, and to further communications on the same subject from the Visiting Committee of Her Majesty's Prison at York Castle, asking the Charity Commissioners to provide some scheme for the disbursement of funds left by benevolent persons for the benefit of the prisoners; if he can explain the delay of the Commissioners in promulgating their arrangements for dealing with these Charitable Funds; and, when the scheme may be expected to be forthcoming?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) (who replied) said: I may be allowed as a Commissioner to answer this Question. The Memorial referred to was forwarded by the Home Office to the Charity Commissioners with an application for the establishment of a scheme in April, 1886. The negotiations with the Prison Commissioners as to the model form of scheme to be eventually adopted in this and in many similar cases were very protracted; and great difficulties were experienced in obtaining the assent of the Prison Commissioners to the terms of the model scheme. Finally, in January last, the Charity Commissioners took the whole responsibility of the scheme upon themselves and established it. Several other schemes of a similar character, including one for the York Prison Charities, are now being proceeded with.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RETURN OF RESIDENT MAGISTRATES (No. 89)—CAPTAIN O'NEILL SEGRAVE, R.M.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the insertion in the Return of Resident Magistrates (No. 89) opposite the name "O'Neill Segrave," and under the heading "former vocation," of the words "in the Army;" and, whether this gentleman admitted at the inquest at Michelstown that he had failed to obtain a Commission in the Army?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): In answer to the Question of the hon. Gentleman, the Resident Magistrate referred to served in the Cape Infantry.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—HAWKERS' LICENCES.

Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the remission of the Licence Duty paid by hawkers, which is contemplated by the Budget, includes the Police Licence of 5*s* a-year paid by pedlars?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; the duty which I propose to remit is the Revenue Licence Duty of £4 now paid by hawkers, and not the Police Licence Duty of 5*s.* payable by pedlars. I have received several communications on the subject of hawkers' Licences which show that a good deal of misapprehension exists as to the extent of my proposals, arising probably from the writers forgetting the legal distinction between a hawker and a pedlar. Under the existing law a hawker, from a Revenue point of view, is a travelling trader who uses "a horse or other beast bearing or drawing burthen," and he pays £4 a-year for a licence. It is this Licence Duty which my Budget proposals would abolish, leaving the hawker liable to the Wheel Tax or the Heavy Van Tax, as the case may be. The pedlar, or foot hawker, is not at the present time liable to any Revenue Duty. He formerly paid £2, but this duty was abolished by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in 1870. In the following year, however, the Pedlars' Act made him subject to police supervision, and he pays 5*s.* a-year for his police certificate. It is clearly desirable that the hawker who uses a horse should, equally with the foot hawker or pedlar, be under supervision and compelled to obtain a certificate; and I will communicate with my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary as to the best way of bringing hawkers within the scope of the Pedlars' Act of 1871.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND)—POLLUTION OF LOCH LONG.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether a dredging barge, No. 7, of Greenock or Glasgow, on Saturday, 7th April, discharged several hundred tons of filth and dredgings in Loch Long, and whether such discharges are of frequent occurrence; and, in view of the Reports as to the pollution of the loch recently laid upon the Table of the House, whether any action will be taken by the Government?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am informed that a dredger belonging to the Greenock Harbour Trust discharged 160 tons of land dredgings in Loch Long on the day mentioned. With regard to the second paragraph, the matter is still under consideration.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE TREDEGAR CLUB.

Mr. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with respect to the reply contained in his letter of the 29th ultimo, that the four Club appeals determined by certain Glamorgan County Magistrates in Quarter Sessions "were entirely heard and determined upon the merits," and particularly that in the case of the new Tredegar Club—

> "The Court was of opinion that the Club was properly constituted, and that there was no evidence of illegal sale of liquors,"

and in the case of the Ellesmere—

> "That the Court could not distinguish it from the usual local Clubs used by upper classes,"

and consequently allowed the appeal, If he will cause further inquiry to be made upon the following points:—whether, in the case of the new Tredegar Club, the Court, through the Chairman (Mr. Fowler), refused to decide the case upon its merits, by finding, as a fact, that the Club in question was either *boná fide* or not *boná fide*; whether the Court, after first stating that the onus of proof of *bona fides* lay upon the appellant, subsequently threw the onus of proving that the Club was not *boná fide* upon the respondent; whether this decision was in accordance with the law; whether the evidence of one witness, Jarrett, who had only been connected with the Club during a short part of its existence, was the only evidence upon which the Court gave its decision, "allowing the appeal" with costs; and, whether, in the case of the Ellesmere Club, the proprietor has been since—namely, on the 28th ultimo, prosecuted by the Inland Revenue, and convicted of three separate offences—namely, selling spirits without a licence to an officer of the Inland Revenue, fined £50 and costs or three months' hard labour; for the sale of beer to the same officer, £20 and costs or one month; and for the sale of tobacco, £20 and costs or one month, all upon the so-called Club premises?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a further Report from the Chairman of the Glamorganshire Magistrates this morning as to this case, and he informs me that after hearing evidence on both sides the Court decided the case on its merits, and came to the conclusion that the new Tredegar Club was a *bonâ fide* Club properly constituted. There was some discussion as to the burden of proof; but the question did not, in the opinion of the Court, become material to the decision. The respondent was heard first, and the Court then called on the appellant to give further evidence. The Court was composed of four barristers and the Chairman, who is Stipendiary Magistrate for Swansea. I see no reason to question the validity of their decision. Jarrett, who had been treasurer since April, 1887, was the only witness called by the appellant; but the evidence for the respondent had already established a *primâ facie* case for exemption. The Chairman informs me that he had seen in a local paper the statement referred to in the last paragraph of the Question; but there was no evidence to this effect before the Court.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES AT ENNIS—CONDUCT OF THE MILITARY.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is correct that troops drafted into Ennis on Sunday the 8th instant, to preserve the peace of the town in view of a Nationalist meeting summoned for the afternoon, marched through the streets from the Railway Station, on entering the town in the morning, singing *Rule Britannia* and cheering loudly, to the disturbance of persons assembled in their places of worship; and, whether such conduct by troops detailed to act under such circumstances is in accordance with the Rules of the Service?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, the Question should be addressed to the Secretary of State for War.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said: From Reports which have been received from the officers commanding the detachments drafted into Ennis on the 8th instant, it appears that some of the troops cheered the Hussars on their arrival and departure, and also sang patriotic songs as they marched; but it is stated that they did not commence singing until after they had passed the chapel where Mass was being celebrated. They are also reported to have cheered Her Majesty. I do not see that in any of these proceedings any Regulation has been departed from.

MR. ROWNTREE: May I ask, arising out of this Question, whether the chapel to which the right hon. Gentleman refers was the parish chapel or the Franciscan Chapel?

MR. E. STANHOPE: My want of local knowledge does not enable me to say; but the information I have received states that they were long past "the chapel" before any singing began.

MR. ROWNTREE: Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiries as to whether it was the parish church or the Franciscan Church that his information refers to?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I cannot undertake to do that.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman grant an independent inquiry if the clergyman of the church gives evidence that he saw the soldiers passing the church singing?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No; I do not propose to grant an inquiry.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT —TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS INTEREST ACCOUNT.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What amount is annually paid from the Exchequer to meet the deficiency on the Trustee Savings Banks Interest Account; what will be the approximate increase of this annual deficiency in consequence of the conversion of Stock held by the National Debt Commissioners to meet the charges on the Savings Banks Fund; and, whether the Government feel justified in maintaining the rate of interest allowed to Trustee Savings Banks at 3 per cent?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The amount of the deficiency on the Trustee Savings Banks Interest Account was for the year ended November 30, 1885, £4,774 13*s.* 1*d.*; for the year ended November, 30, 1886, £3,740 4*s.* 7*d.*; and for the year ended November 30, 1887, £13,746 10*s.* 8*d.* The Interest Account of the Savings Banks Fund will not be affected by the conversion of the Debt in the present year, because the rate of interest on the converted Stock is maintained at 3 per cent until April 5, 1889. The question of the rate of interest to be allowed in future to Trustees of Savings Banks and to their depositors is now engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government; and a measure dealing with the subject will probably be submitted to Parliament in the course of the present Session.

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE—THE DUTY AND DRAWBACKS ON EXPORTED CIGARS.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is his intention to remove the anomaly of our fiscal regulations in respect to the duty and drawback on exported cigars; and, whether he will take into consideration the serious and increasing amount of loss of employment to the workmen caused by a law which, while restricting the consumption of British made cigars at home, renders their exportation impossible?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Member's Question involves several assumptions. He assumes that there is an anomaly in our fiscal regulations in respect of the duty and drawback on exported cigars, which the Revenue Authorities do not admit. Then he assumes a consequence, loss of employment, as due to a cause which, if his first assumption is incorrect, is not the real cause. I presume, from the quarter in which the hon. Member sits, that he is a Freetrader, and only desires the drawback to be so adjusted as to represent equality, not protection. That is also my desire. I desire absolute fair play. If it could be proved to me that the drawback is insufficient to establish equality I should immediately propose an alteration of the law; but such proof has thus far not been forthcoming, or, at, least, has not been conclusive. If the hon. Member and his clients in this case can bring any additional facts to my knowledge to prove that they are really handicapped, and that re-adjustment is necessary for equality, I will gladly examine such facts.

METROPOLIS—EXCESSIVE HEIGHT OF NEW BUILDING AT ALBERT GATE.

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to a building under construction at Albert Gate with a frontage to the Park, and whether he has any power to restrict the height of 160 feet, to which it is to be carried; and, whether he has considered the probable injury which it will cause to the trees and shrubs and the roadway in the Park?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): My attention has been called to the building under construction at Albert Gate, the height of which on the side facing the Park is, I understand, intended to be 130 feet. I fear that if that intention is carried out it will seriously interfere with the enjoyment by the public of that part of the Park, and I have communicated with the solicitors and architects to the undertaking, with a view to procuring some diminution of the height of the edifice; but I have not as yet received any satisfactory answer. I am advised that the Commissioners of Works have no power to interfere directly with anything the owners may do on their own land, but that indirectly we have a certain power, because the owners of the land have no such right of access of light from the Park as would prevent us from raising the Park wall, or erecting a screen which would intercept the light and view from the proposed building on the side of the Park. I should be very glad if public opinion could be brought to bear to assist us in protecting the Park from the threatened injury and disfigurement.

FOOD SUPPLY—IMPORTS OF AMERICAN BACON AND HAM—THE MERCHANDIZE TRADE MARKS ACT.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is the case that large amounts of American bacon and ham are imported and sold as Wiltshire and Cumberland; and, whether the Merchandize Trade Marks Act will cover these cases?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I must refer the hon. Member to an answer which I recently gave to the hon. and gallant Member for the Wirral Division of Cheshire (Captain Cotton), and repeat that, though I cannot give an authoritative opinion, I believe that the sale of foreign meat as English meat when English meat is demanded is an offence under Section 6 of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875.

ARMY—COIR FIBRE BEDS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table any information as to the durability, cost, and usefulness of coir, jute, or other fibre for bedding in the Army at Home or in India, and especially as to its cost, on a term of 10 years, compared with straw; and, whether it is true that the use of fibre for bedding would secure a large annual saving?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: I can only repeat the reply made to the hon. Member by the Secretary of State on the 14th of February. Trials have been made with coir and also with New Zealand hemp; but the result was that the bedding was found less satisfactory to the soldiers, and rather more expensive to the Government, than paillasse straw. Further, the adoption of either material would involve a very large initial outlay for loose covers.

RIVER THAMES—IMPORTS OF PETROLEUM FROM RUSSIA.

MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware that petroleum is now coming in bulk from Russia in tank steamers right up the Thames as high as the Regent's Canal Dock, and that they discharge with fires alight on board, frequently working night and day; that these steamers often carry upwards of 12,000 barrels, and that so little precaution is exercised in the River, that two steamers went into one of the up town docks lately with inflammable oil in barrels below 73 degrees Fahr., and stored the oil on the quay; and, if he will take immediate steps to bring in a Bill to regulate the storage of petroleum?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The vessels containing in tanks refined petroleum oil—not petroleum to which the Act applies—discharge oil into the Regent's Canal Dock, the Company having satisfied themselves that such arrangements would safely be permitted subject to the precautions imposed by their ordinary bye-laws. The fires which are used to work the pumping engines are suitably isolated and protected. As regards the bringing of petroleum up the Thames, the Conservators allow no vessels having any petroleum to which the Act applies to come up above Thames Haven, or in the case of other petroleum or refined oil above Dudman's Dock; and in the latter case, only subject to certain specified precautions, including the production of a certificate that the cargo contains no low-test oil. Diligent inquiries have failed to elicit that any such case as is referred to in the latter part of the Question has occurred; and a careful examination of the tests of samples periodically taken by the officers of the Metropolitan Board of Works from the consignments on the London wharves in 1888 discloses only one instance of a sample with a flashing-point as low as 73, and none with a flashing-point below 73. A Bill regulating the storage and conveyance of inflammable liquids is in active preparation, and we hope to be able to introduce it this Session.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can see his way to exempt farmers' nags from the Horse Tax to the extent of one nag for every 500, or part of 500, acres farmed?

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked a Question on the same subject.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, that if the noble Viscount and the hon. Member would wait two or three days until the Bill was in their hands, they would be able to see how the matter was dealt with.

PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION OF LONDON (LIMITED)—STAMP DUTY ON BONDS.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that, according to the statements of the officials of the Provident Association of London (Limited), that Company has issued over 80,000 bonds to the nominal value of over £2,000,000 sterling; and, whether such bonds are subject to Stamp Duty; and, if so, whether they were duly stamped?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Inland Revenue has no official information that such bonds have been issued by the Company referred to, as stated. Such bonds would be liable to Stamp Duty; but it is not known whether they have been stamped or not. As the law now stands, no penalty would be incurred by the issue of such bonds unstamped. The only safeguard to the Stamp Revenue which exists is that such bonds, if unstamped, could not be produced as evidence in Court, except on payment of a penalty of £10 in each case. It has already been stated to the House that it is proposed to make the application of the existing law respecting the stamping of instruments somewhat more stringent. A clause has been inserted in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill which imposes the penalty of £10 upon any person neglecting to pay the duty chargeable on any instrument within 14 days from the date of its execution; and, in addition, the penalty will be increased by the forfeiture of an amount equal to the unpaid duty.

LIGHTHOUSES AND LIGHTSHIPS—TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Government are taking any steps to prepare a scheme for establishing a complete system of telegraphic communication around the coasts of these Islands, with the view of saving life and property in case of shipwrecks, and of giving news of the movements of war ships in time of war and of merchant vessels in time of peace; and, whether such a scheme will include the absorption into some Government system of the Shipping News Stations at present maintained by Lloyd's Committee?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I can only repeat what I recently stated to a large and influential deputation, that the subject of communication with light-vessels and lighthouses was considered last year by a Departmental Committee, who have expressed an opinion that the experiments at the Sunk Light Ship should be continued for a further period of 18 months. I would, however, point out that the question of naval defence of the country, and the question of communication between Coastguards and distant Signal Stations, are matters for the Admiralty and Post Office, subject to the Treasury, rather than for the Board of Trade.

IRELAND—THE DISTURBANCES AT ENNIS—CONDUCT OF THE MILITARY.

Mr. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact, as reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 12th instant, that some soldiers of the Derbyshire regiment paraded the streets of Ennis the previous day displaying Orange emblems in their caps; and, whether it is in accordance with Military Regulations that soldiers should display Party emblems; and, if not, whether he will issue instructions that the Regulations shall in future be complied with by the soldiers belonging to this regiment.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The officer commanding the detachment of the Derbyshire regiment at Clare Castle reports as follows:—"The report about Sherwood Foresters wearing emblems on Wednesday is entirely false." With regard to the general question of wearing Party emblems, no soldier is permitted to make any addition to his authorized uniform.

Mr. COX: Considering the frequent conflicts between this regiment and the people, will the right hon. Gentleman take into his consideration the desirability of removing the Derbyshire regiment from Clare Castle?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I am afraid the circumstances connected with this very question show the necessity of retaining the military in this district.

Mr. COX said, he did not ask the right hon. Gentleman to remove the military altogether. He merely asked him to remove the regiment. He supposed he would get the same answer as before if he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he would grant an independent inquiry into this matter; because hundreds of respectable people could prove the accuracy of the statement contained in the Question.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: In this case there is nothing to inquire into. The statement is altogether false.

ROYAL PARKS AND PLEASURE GARDENS—RICHMOND OLD DEER PARK.

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is correctly stated, in the Return recently presented on the 21st February last, relating to Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, that the management of "Richmond Old Deer Park" was "transferred to the Metropolitan Board of Works on 1st November, 1888;" if that date is a misprint for 1887 or any other past day; and, whether the Park will be now thrown open to the public?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Member quotes from the first issue of the Parliamentary Paper referred to, which contained the two misprints to which he draws attention; these were corrected in a subsequent issue of the document. The Old Deer Park, Richmond, has never been open to the public; and I am not aware of any change being in contemplation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—PUBLICANS' LICENCES.

Mr. AGG-GARDNER (Cheltenham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, if the owner of a public house licence for seven days should be compelled to close his premises on Sundays by a County Council, he would be entitled to the remission of one-seventh of his Licence Duty?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) (who replied) said: The holder of a public-house licence would, under the circumstances mentioned, be entitled to the remission of one-seventh of his Licence Duty.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST—RESULTS OF THE INQUIRY.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he proposes to inform Parliament as to the particulars and results of the inquiry into the affray at Mitchelstown in September last?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The inquiry alluded to was a Departmental one, and it is, I believe, unusual to lay the particulars in such cases before Parliament. The main object of the inquiry was to investigate the action of the officers responsible for the handling of the police; and though the Report deals also with such matters of public interest as the action of the hon. Member for East Tipperary (Mr. Condon) in urging the crowd to obstruct the reporter, the necessity for taking the reporter by the particular route selected, the consequences of the (doubtless well-meant) interference of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and the justification for the firing from the barrack window, their comments are only incidental to the main subject of their investigation, and are, moreover, not, I think, of a character which would give any satisfaction to the friends of the right hon. Member. But though I do not think it expedient to make the Report public, I am perfectly prepared to show all the papers confidentially to the right hon. Gentleman, should he desire to see them.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: May I explain to the right hon. Gentleman that I did not ask for these particulars in my own interest, or in the interest of any friend of mine, but in the interest of the public? No confidential communication which he may do me the honour to make will, in the least degree, satisfy the public interest or curiosity in the matter. I wish to ask him whether I am to understand that he declines to state publicly any of those particulars or results that he has partly enumerated?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the right hon. Gentleman would really like me to make a selection from these Reports of the statements of the Commissioners which I think might usefully be made public, I will consider the propriety of doing so; but I thought that probably he and his Friends might have some reason to complain of a selection which would entirely depend on myself. That is why I said that I would allow the right hon. Gentleman to see all the Papers confidentially.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: What I wished the right hon. Gentleman to do was to produce all that could be produced without direct injury to the Public Service.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I should like to produce would be the comments of the Commissioners upon all these Questions of what I may call matters of public interest; but I think the people who might have reason to complain of that would be the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: The evidence I should like to see much more than the comments.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, if the comments were published, the evidence upon which they were based would be published also. It would be an entirely new precedent, and the selection would take a long time to make.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): May I ask whether the Members of this House who were present, or any of the priests or others who were spectators, were brought forward as witnesses on the occasion of this inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Will the hon. Gentleman give Notice of that Question?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question on another subject not immediately with regard to this matter? Whether he is able to tell the House the result of the inquiry that he promised to make into precedents in connection with the proceedings at Ennis?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, the right hon. Gentleman is aware that there is at this moment a legal investigation going on into the circumstances of the Ennis meeting. I have made some inquiry into the precedents. I am sorry I have not brought down to the House the papers; but there were three or four instances during the last few years in which there have been collisions between the people and the police ending fatally to a certain number of the people engaged. An inquiry was constantly asked for by the Representatives from Ireland, and was, I think, constantly refused by the Government of the day, The results in those cases were of a far more serious character—leading to loss of life sometimes—than any of the injuries which occurred at Ennis, the most serious injury at Ennis being that which occurred to the little finger of a reporter. Under these circumstances, and pending the result of the legal investigation, I do not think it necessary to make any further statement on the matter.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as the justification of the proposed Cart and Wheel Tax is stated to be that those who use roads should contribute to their maintenance, he proposes to levy this new tax upon the mail carts, parcel vans, and other vehicles either the property of, or hired by, the Postmaster General for the service of the Post Office?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; I do not contemplate pushing my argument to that extreme conclusion.

IRELAND—INQUEST ON JOHN MADDEN, AN INMATE OF THE CRANNA ORPHANAGE, NEAR NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen the report of an inquest recently held by the Coroner for North Tipperary on view of the body of John Madden, an inmate of the Cranna Orphanage, near Nenagh in that county; whether his attention has been called to the appalling state of facts in connection with the management of this Institution, and the treatment of the deceased and other children therein disclosed in the evidence given by Mr. J. C. Goring, Miss Farrell, and Dr. Morton of Nenagh; whether this inquest on the boy Madden on the 31st of March was the second within a few weeks held at Cranna Orphanage; whether any Government Inspector visits this or similar Institutions in Ireland; and, if so, when such official made his last Report, and what was the nature of it; and, whether a full inquiry will be at once instituted, in view of the facts already disclosed as to the treatment of these orphan children? The hon. Gentleman added that some important facts contained in his original Question, which would have enabled the House to understand the matter better, had been left out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman for his courtesy in supplying me with a newspaper report of the proceedings, with regard to which I have no other means of informing myself. I have seen the report that he has been good enough to send me. The Orphanage is not under the control of the Government, nor is it visited by any Government Inspector. I have directed full inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case; but time has not admitted of my receiving the necessary replies. It appears, however, from the evidence reported in the newspaper that the Trustees of the Institution hold responsible positions, having at their head a very distinguished gentleman, the Very Rev. Dr. Chester, Bishop of Killaloe, and, no doubt, they will take immediate steps to remedy any defects which may exist.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WINE DUTY.

Admiral Sir EDMUND COMMERELL (Southampton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can hold out any hopes of the remission of the increased duty on stocks of cheap wines now in bond, on the ground that a 5*s*. additional duty renders them almost unsaleable?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think there are strong arguments for granting a remission of the increased duty on the cheaper class of still wines now in bond; and I am considering whether any arrangement can be made for relieving them without raising claims on the part of importers of other classes of bottled wines who are not exposed to similar disadvantages, and are not, in my opinion, entitled to any exemption.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—AMATONGALAND—CONCESSIONS BY THE QUEEN REGENT.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is aware that concessions, purporting to be granted by the Queen Regent of Amatongaland, and covering landowning, mining, railway, waterway, and other commercial and industrial monoplies, are being offered for sale in England; whether the Queen Regent has power to grant such concessions; and, whether they have been made or acquired with the acquiescence of the Imperial Government.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to my hon. Friend, I may say that I have seen a notice in the Press of the formation of a Company to work an alleged concession from the Queen of Amatongaland, purporting to cede monopolies of the nature mentioned in the Question. The Queen has, however, denied that she has granted any such concessions; and Her Majesty's Government have not in any way recognized them. I may add that a letter on the subject was published in *The Times* of December 28 last.

INLAND REVENUE—STAMPS ON PATENT ASSIGNMENTS.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that the Inland Revenue Authorities have recently instructed the officials of the Patent Office to refuse registration of agreements affecting new patents bearing a 6*d*. stamp, which has hitherto been the invariable custom; whether he is aware that this action of the Inland Revenue Authorities, which is presumably with the object of compelling the registration of formal assignments bearing a heavy *ad valorem* stamp instead of the more economical process previously adopted, will, by restricting the facilities for testing new inventions, inflict the most grievous hardship upon the poorer class of inventors, and act as a serious barrier to the inventive genius of the country; and, whether he will state by what authority the Inland Revenue Department has given these instructions, and whether he will cause the same to be rescinded?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Some misapprehension has existed as to the proper Stamp Duty chargeable upon instruments which are in form agreements affecting patents, but which operate as equitable assignments of the patents. If the instruments were merely chargeable as agreements, the duty on them would be 6*d.* only; but in cases where they operate as assignments they are chargeable with *ad valorem* duty as assignments on sale of mortgage, or with a duty of 10*s.* as assignments otherwise, as the case may be. In consequence of an erroneous opinion, many instruments which were chargeable as assignments have been registered at the Patent Office when bearing the duty of 6*d.* only; and when the Inland Revenue Authorities became aware of this, they drew the attention of the officials of the Patent Office to the matter, and to their duty under the Stamp Act. The *ad valorem* duty of 10*s.* per cent upon the consideration for the assignment on sale, or of 2*s.* 6*d.* per cent upon the mortgage money in the case of mortgage, is not, I think, such as to operate in such a manner as the hon. Member appears to forbode. But, however that may be, the Inland Revenue Department have only been executing the law as it now stands in the action they have taken, and have acted under the statutory authority vested in the Board.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE MURDER OF JAMES FITZMAURICE AT LIXNAW, CO. KERRY—REPORTED STATEMENT OF THE HON. MR. JUSTICE O'BRIEN AT THE WICKLOW ASSIZES.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If he has seen the reported statement of the Hon. Mr. Justice O'Brien at the Wicklow Assizes in *The Irish Times* of 12th April, that his Lordship had before him "a printed statement made apparently on oath by the prisoner" (a man named Buckley, on trial for his life, on a charge for which two persons have already been sentenced to death); can he say if this was a statement made under the Inquisition Clause of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and, how came it to be furnished to the Court, and by whom?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): Sir, on inquiring into the facts of the case, I find that the statement referred to was not made under any provision of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, nor was Buckley, or either of the other prisoners charged with the offence, examined under that Act. The document referred to was an information made by Buckley; and a copy of it was, with the other informations and depositions, supplied by the Crown Solicitor, under the direction of the Attorney General, to the solicitor for the prisoners as well as to the Judge.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL — AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can now give any information as to the manner in which the sum of £5,000 provided in the Estimates will, if voted, be distributed to the needs of agricultural education?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Agricultural Department is not yet in possession of the £5,000 alluded to, nor has it a staff at its disposal yet for the needful inquiries. The Privy Council Office will be ready to receive applications for consideration by the Department which may be entrusted with the duty of dealing with them.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—APPOINTMENTS FOR THE COUNTY OF WILTS.

SIR THOMAS GROVE (Wilts, Wilton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is true that the Lord Chancellor has recently refused to place on the Commission of the Peace for the County of Wilts certain owners of land resident near Hungerford, in the County of Berks, on the ground that, not being resident in Wiltshire, they were ineligible; if it is true that this refusal is based on two Acts of King Henry V.; and, if he is aware that many magistrates may be in consequence disqualified from acting in counties in which they are now doing their duty as Justices of the Peace?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): It is true that the Lord Chancellor has refused to place on the Commission of the Peace for the County of Wilts certain owners of land resident near Hungerford, and his refusal is based on the Acts quoted. But though the Lord Chancellor considers that those Acts are directory to him in the exercise of his discretion, he does not consider that they affect the jurisdiction of a magistrate when once placed on the Commission of the Peace.

THE NAVAL AND MILITARY SYSTEMS —THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can now announce to the House the names of the Members of the promised Royal Commission to inquire into

> "The extent to which our present Naval and Military systems, as at present organized and administered, are adapted to the National wants;"

and, whether he will state the precise terms of the Order of Reference to that Royal Commission?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am sorry that I am not able to give any further information to the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the constitution of this Commission. The right hon. Gentleman will recognize the importance of the question; and although it has received very much of the attention of the Government, we have not yet been able to constitute the Commission in a manner which would be satisfactory to ourselves.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman give any indication as to when he will be able to complete the Commission, seeing that a whole month has elapsed since the promise was given? This is a question in regard to which the element of time is of supreme importance.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am very well aware of that; but the right hon. Gentleman will see that the constitution of the Commission is also a very important matter. That has presented difficulties to us which we have not as yet been able to surmount.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

In reply to Mr. Arthur O'Connor (Donegal, E.),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, that it was not the intention of the Government to send the Criminal Evidence Bill to the Grand Committee on Law.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ARREST OF MR. W. O'BRIEN, M.P.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he perhaps might be permitted, without Notice, to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) had been arrested for attending on the 8th instant at Loughrea a meeting in a proclaimed district; if so, whether a warrant had been issued for the arrest of the hon. Member for the Holmfirth Division of West Yorkshire (Mr. H. J. Wilson); and, if not, why a distinction was made by the Government between the identical action of an English and of an Irish Member?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I think the hon. Gentleman should have given me Notice of the Question. I can assure him that if any English Member has, taking all the circumstances into account, done the same thing as an Irish Member, he will be in precisely the same position.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question as to why the hon. Member had been arrested.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No doubt, a warrant was issued on account of what the hon. Member did at Loughrea last Sunday.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: But would the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to specify whether it was for attending the meeting; or whether it was for words used by him when at the meeting?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it would be desirable that I should make a speech for the prosecution in this House.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): The right hon. Gentleman can state whether the warrant was made out against the hon. Member for making a speech at Loughrea; or whether it was for attending the meeting?

[No reply.]

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I think, Sir, that when a Member of this House has been arrested we have a right to press for information as to why he has been arrested.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon; I thought I had explained that the hon. Member for North-East Cork has been arrested for inciting to, and taking part in, an illegal assembly. I have not got the exact terms of the warrant.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[Bill 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): Sir, I think it may be said that the debate upon this Bill, as far as it has gone, has been marked by a very striking absence of Party feeling. All hon. Members, as far as I know, who have approached the subject, have done so without any perceptible bias either for or against the Bill, on the ground that it is introduced by the present Government. They have approached the subject on its merits, and have come to the discussion apparently with minds entirely free from predilection. And yet it will be allowed that no Bill of greater scope and importance has of late years been presented to this House, or is likely to be soon again presented to it. The Bill itself is the commencement of a recasting of the organization of the rural public life of England. We are putting forth new forms through which that life must act, and the importance of the renewing of this machinery will be more and more appreciated, I think, the more the matter is studied. The whole machinery, of course, cannot be at once recast. It is hoped—perhaps the hope may be realized—that a large proportion of the *personnel* which has hitherto been engaged in the administration of county affairs will continue to have a prominent part in that administration. But whether that hope be realized or not, it is perfectly clear that what we are about to begin must be carried forward. Even should it be proved upon trial that a different order of men and a different kind of senator is brought to the discussion of affairs of the county, it will be impossible to restrict the operations of the new Council now about to be created to the particular functions you are proposing to allot to it. The Council must grow for good or for evil, and its functions must increase. As far as I have discovered from the discussion which has taken place, the question is whether or not those functions should be immediately increased. You are making a start, a beginning, and, as my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General said, I think very fairly, the other night in answer to some criticisms from this side of the House, the object of the Government is to make a good start in this matter of reforming Local Government. That is a most important object. Are you going to make a good start? It is to that question that I shall almost entirely address myself. I do not share the feelings of hon. Members who have criticized the comparatively limited number of subjects which are to be committed to the care of the County Councils. Many hon. Members have urged that we should go further at once. I cannot say that I share that opinion. I am not anxious that we should begin immediately on a larger scale than is now proposed; but what I am anxious for is that we should begin in a way that will admit of an easy and safe enlargement in the future, and in the near future. That enlargement must come, and it depends on the form in which we make a beginning now whether the enlargement will go further and be a source of increasing good, or the reverse. If we make a false start now, although we must go onwards in the path we have chosen, there will be no security that the future development of Local Government will be productive of increased good. I do not for a moment maintain that what is in the Bill is sufficient or necessary if we regard the reconstruction of Local Government as a whole; so viewed, it cannot be satisfactory. I do so far agree with the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. Stevenson) who has given Notice of an Amendment to that effect; but what may not be satisfactory as a complete solution, if offered as such, may be fairly accepted as a satisfactory beginning. I notice that only on Saturday last a gentleman who was formerly a very respected Member of this House, and whose name will be received with respect and esteem by every hon. Member, Mr. Hibbert, speaking in Lancashire about the administration of the Poor Law, said he regretted the omission of the Poor Law system from the Bill; but he added that he did not see how it could be introduced on this stage. That is an opinion expressed by a gentleman of much experience and authority. I do not know whether the hon. Member for the Eye Division intends to press his Motion to a Division. I confess that I should feel compelled to vote against it. I do not regard the Bill as complete; nobody regards it as complete; and the only question is whether you are beginning well, and whether the Bill is sufficient to begin with. I have said that the Bill is of the greatest importance. It will not only recast the local public life of England; but it will have an effect on the House of Commons itself. Whatever may be the future of our local organization, it will affect the composition of this Assembly. My hon. Friend the Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse), speaking on the first night of the debate, threw out a suggestion that the Members for the several divisions of the counties should be, *ex officio*, members of the County Council. That suggestion was made originally by an ex-Member of the House who is well acquainted with the whole question of Local Government. I do not think it will be necessary to adopt that suggestion; because, in any case, there must be an intimate connection between the County Councils and the House. The experience of the past has been that able, practised, and sagacious Chairmen of Quarter Sessions have always had the House open to them. Among the occupants of the County Bench have been men who have distinguished themselves there as able administrators in local matters, and possessing the highest recommendations for Members of the House of Commons; and when the choice of County Members practically lay with the occupants of the County Bench, such men were naturally sent here. So, also, there can be no doubt that, in the future, men who take a prominent part in the County Councils—men of experience and observation, whose qualifications have been tested in the public life of the county—will be the men sent to this House. Therefore, the character of the construction of the County Councils to-day will inevitably affect the House of Commons in the future. More or less, there will be insensibly a reaction, and an important reaction; because it will be found that men of distinction and importance chosen to administer the affairs of the County Councils, and so tried, will be sent to represent the counties in this House; and it, therefore, becomes desirable to see on what lines you are beginning, and whether they give a promise that you will get the best assembly you can devise. Before I address myself to the main question I wish to bring before the House, I should like to say a word or two with regard to the financial part of the scheme. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), in speaking upon this question, not in connection with this Bill, but on another matter, expressed much satisfaction in regard to what has been done with reference to finance. I confess that I do not quite share the satisfaction of my right hon. Friend. What is it that is proposed by this Bill? The financial arrangements suggested do not by any means realize my expectations, or give promise of doing so. I had hoped for something of this kind — that having cast your County Councils it would be possible to place under the control of such Councils the right to develop, increase, or reduce certain taxes hitherto under the care of this House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There should be a revenue capable of being increased by the County Councils, and, of course, a revenue capable of being decreased. That increase or decrease should be largely, if not altogether, under the control of the County Council. The expenditure in the same way should be under their responsibility and control, and in future should be subjected to their supervision. This

Bill, however, does not give anything like a right. The revenue assigned to the County Councils is, except one item, wholly independent of the power of the County Councils. You give to the Council power to collect certain taxes; other taxes are collected for them; they are to have a certain allotment of the Probate Duty; but only in one respect do you give the Council itself the power of taxing, and that is the right of increasing the Licensing Duties by 20 per cent. Whether that power will eventually be given to the County Councils or not I do not know. It is, however, the only case in which the Bill gives the County Councils that power of husbanding the resources of the country which I hoped would have been the desire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I had always understood to be the wish of the reformers of Local Government. This Bill, however, does not do that, and, with the exception I have pointed out which may never be brought into operation, it gives no independent control over the county finances. The County Councils are to have a share of the Probate Duties, but they are not under the control of the Councils, and are not elastic, but may go up and down just as it is scrambled for by the Boards of Guardians.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Perhaps I may be allowed to explain that the proportion of the amount to be distributed for local purposes is absolutely fixed.

MR. COURTNEY: Quite so; the absolute amount to be distributed is to be distributed among all the Boards of Guardians which are to receive it; but I contend that the amount received by any one Council will depend upon the energy with which the Board of Guardians, within the area of the Council, have scrambled for the money. The more indoor paupers the Guardians can create, the greater will be the County Council's share, and I fear there will be a competition for the multiplication of indoor paupers. In that way there may be a certain amount of elasticity; but its security will be of a very feeble kind. As the money is received in one hand it goes out in the other. That does not seem to me to give any promise of real economy and good financial management in the future, because you do not give to the Council the benefits of economy and the responsibility of management. Two-thirds of what they receive will be paid automatically, and they will not be able to reap the benefit of economy any more than an individual would derive an advantage by transferring his account from one bank to another. The only change is that the distributing authority is made the County Authority, instead of the Imperial Exchequer. That is all. You give them no power in respect of economy; and I confess that this is a matter which has greatly disappointed me, because, in my opinion, the Bill altogether fails to recognize the ideal which the reformers of local taxation have had before them. The only effect of the scheme, as far as I can see, is this—that there will be a great multiplication of indoor paupers, and whether that is good or not is a matter which is open to the gravest doubt. I do not think that anybody will be prepared to say that the extension of indoor pauperism is an object which Boards of Guardians should in this way carry out, or that they should enter into competition with one another for a share of the public money on the sole ground of the number of paupers they bring into their Unions. Indeed, the desirability of such action is a matter of such extreme doubt that I think any hon. Member will hesitate to avow his opinion as to what the effect may be on the future social condition of the country. This inelasticity of the financial system, the want of control you are really giving to the County Councils over the finances of the future, arises mainly from this fact—that the Poor Law administration is kept apart from the County Councils. If you had the Poor Law administration under the County Councils you might, to some extent—perhaps not completely—entrust the expenditure and receipt of money to the Council, and animate it with the feeling of responsibility and economy we desire to secure. But you have not done so; the Bill does not put the administration of the Poor Law into the hands of the County Council, and, as I have already stated, Mr. Hibbert hesitates to suggest that it should be at once brought under the control of the County Council. In fact, that gentleman says that he does not see the way in which it could be done. My right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax, although he objected in his speech to the exclusion of Poor Law administration from the Bill, spoke in an hesitating way as to the possibility of bringing it within it. He spoke rather as if he were expressing an opinion which had been conveyed to him by other persons than expressing a conviction which he most seriously entertained. It is very doubtful whether the Poor Law administration could be brought under the Bill without involving considerable change, and entirely remodelling the principle on which the scheme proceeds. I think it is doubtful, to say the least, whether there is any hon. Member of this House who, looking at the matter seriously and quietly, would come to the conclusion that it is clearly desirable to place the Poor Law administration of the country under such a body as that which you are about to create. And now, Sir, I desire hon. Members to give me their attention to this question. You are creating a County Council on certain particular lines; I want you to consider what confidence you can have in the administration of the Poor Law if you entrust that administration to a body constructed as the County Council is to be, or to any similar authority. How is the County Council to be constructed? Mainly by the election of a certain number of members without a full and free franchise, elected from single-membered districts into which the county will be divided. The first embodiment of the County Council is to be the election by the occupying ratepayers of the county of a certain number of members, one member from each division. That is the way in which you propose to elect your County Council. That is the principle on which you proceed, and I would ask hon. Members who are listening to me whether they can, with any satisfaction or any assurance of good results, entrust the administration of the Poor Law to a body elected in that way, or in any fashion nearly akin to it? We have as yet had absolutely no experience of a local Governing Body elected in this fashion. We cannot refer to any precedent for it. Town Councils are elected in a different way, and we are now, for the first time, proposing to elect Local Bodies on the principle of one member for each district into which the county is divided. I may be told that the House of Commons is at the present moment elected in that way, but for the management of local affairs there is no precedent. But let me ask the President of the Local Government Board this question—Does he consider that this House, in its history in connection with the Poor Law, has been very encouraging since the establishment of single-membered seats? I remember how a question of Poor Law administration, which involved a most important principle, was raised on the eve of the General Election which immediately preceded the last. I do not think it is possible to overstate the importance of the principle involved. I refer to the Bill relating to the disqualification of voters who had been in the receipt of medical relief. That question was raised immediately before the Election of 1885. The Government deprecated the introduction of the Bill, and expressed their fears in regard to it. Some most prominent occupants of the Bench behind me also deprecated its introduction. [Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham W.): No.] My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) is certainly one of the most prominent occupants of the Bench behind me, but he is not the only prominent Member who sits on those Benches, and it is no breach of confidence to say that the Leader of the Opposition disliked the proposal as much as the Government disliked it. But a General Election was coming on, and although the Government deprecated the introduction of the question they found themselves obliged at length to bring in a Bill. It was brought in and carried with considerable rapidity, and the discussions upon it were marked by the absence of many of the leading Members of the House who did not like to commit themselves to an expression of an opinion on the question. The Bill was fought by two excellent Members, who, however, announced that they did not intend to seek re-election—namely, Mr. Clare Read and Mr. Albert Pell. Those hon. Gentlemen were thus in an independent position, and they fought the battle most gallantly. Now, whether this relaxation of the stringency of the Poor Law was a good or an evil thing, here was an instance of the power of popular feeling at the time of a General Election upon the House of Commons. I would ask you to carry your minds from the question of Members of this House, who, after all, are controlled by very much graver questions than this comparatively minor one—I ask you to carry your minds to the question of the election of County Councils and the question of administration of the Poor Law being raised on the eve of an Election. I would ask you whether you could trust to get men elected to the County Council to whom with confidence and satisfaction you could safely confide the future management of the Poor Law? I challenge anyone to say that he would see with satisfaction and without apprehension what the consequence might be of entrusting the administration of the Poor Law to a Council so elected. I think every hon. Member will admit that he could not with satisfaction regard the future administration of the Poor Law by such a body. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has said, with perfect historic accuracy, that no change in the law in our time has been so important and so pregnant with consequences as the institution of the new Poor Law. It was introduced by a powerful Liberal Ministry and supported by the Duke of Wellington; but even though brought in by the Ministry and supported by the Leader of the Opposition it was only carried with difficulty. It has never been a popular law, and it never can be, and if you entrust the administration of this law to a popularly elected body, elected in the fashion I have described, you will entrust it to a body which cannot be regarded with satisfaction as the safe depository of such a power. I heard, in the course of this discussion, the observations which were made by my hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst.) They were vigorous and interesting remarks, and I heard them not without sympathy. My hon. Friend said—"You are creating a Council to which you are giving no power with respect to the administration of the Poor Law. You are, on the one hand, professing to enfranchise every ratepayer of the county, poor and rich; but on that subject in which the poor are most interested—namely, the question how the poor are to be treated in their destitution—the question of the conditions of the relief and the treatment in old age of men who have worked hard and honourably in their youth, you will allow the working man, through his representative, not to have a word to say." I share the feeling of my hon. Friend. I think it is impossible to debar the representatives of the poor man and the representatives of the working man from a voice in these questions, and an important voice too. At the same time it does not follow that the administration of the Poor Law can possibly or safely be entrusted to a body such as a County Council would be. The Poor Law administration never will or can be popular. You see distress and misery around you, and there is a strong temptation to assist the distressed, and to alleviate the misery, and to make the poor wretched sufferers happy and comfortable for the remaining years of their life. That is what you do see, but you do not also see the consequences of such action not only on the man relieved, but on the whole body of the labouring population. Those consequences are often unseen and unthought of. It is too frequently forgotten that the Poor Law, which is often styled harsh and even inhuman, has done much to relieve the poor and reduce pauperism and the Poor Rate. My right hon. Friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) expatiated the other night upon the reduction of pauperism and the reduction of the Poor Rate. If you yield to the impression of the moment you will add to the relief given and will swell the Poor Rate; indeed, you will come within measurable distance of a return to the system which prevailed before the passing of the Poor Law Act, when many parishes were absolutely eaten up with Poor Rates, and many persons left when finding there was nothing to be made out of them, thanks to the extravagant administration of the Poor Law. If you are entering now, as you must feel you are entering, upon a course of reconstruction as regards the local administration of the country, although you cannot deal with the Poor Law in this Bill, you know the time must come when that must follow; and can you have any confidence that the Poor Law, with all its severity of aspect, but all its benevolence in operation, will be maintained by such Councils as you now propose to create? You can have no such guarantee; on the contrary, there will be every peril before you of reproducing the evils of former times. There is now as much as then a mass of ignorant, though honest sentiment about, which occasionally finds expression in this House, which I, for one, regard as one of the greatest dangers besetting our social system. I find in the Bill as it stands, although it does not entrust to the County Council the administration of the Poor Law, that a subject of the highest importance in regard to the social condition of the mass of the people is about to be entrusted to this Council—namely, that of emigration. Well, nothing is more popular than the remedy of emigration as a means of relieving distress, and yet nothing is more certain than that the carrying out of a vast system of emigration would make our distress perpetual. You take out the poor and send them away, and you leave those behind influenced by no kind of feeling or motive to prevent the gap so created from being speedily refilled. On the contrary, you encourage it being refilled, because it would be known that as soon as misery reaches a sufficient height the State would interfere to relieve those who suffer; and thus you would continue in the old vicious circle. In your attempt to relieve the pauper you would, on the one hand, be relieving distress, and, on the other, be multiplying it. This power in regard to emigration is to be given to the County Council. Suppose that an industrial crisis arises, such as some persons imagine to be not far off, and supposing that just as mining in my native county has declined owing to competition with more lucrative fields of mining enterprize—supposing that employment in the crowded counties of the North diminished, you would have to face a similar necessity for reducing the population. Then, instead of relying on spontaneous and self-sustained efforts in the direction of emigration, you would rely on the development of emigration by the County Council, and would appeal to them for means. What kind of social future is to be looked forward to if such a crisis should arise? Surely, then, you should pause, when you are beginning to construct such machinery as this, in order to see the task you are undertaking, and the machinery you are making to cope with, and, if possible, to solve the problem. I believe that the Government must have felt, as the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) also seemed to feel, that the Poor Law administration cannot without much consideration be brought into this Bill, and yet you are preparing to bring it in. Ought you not rather to take thought, while there yet is time, whether, instead of creating such a body as you propose to create, you should not rather create some body in which the voice of caution, of thought, and of experience would be heard, as well as the voice of sentiment, of feeling, and of emotion. And now, Sir, I turn to another question which is partly excluded from the operation of this Bill—namely, the question of the police. A good deal of agitation has been going on with respect of the control of the county police. We know that at present, it is to a large extent in the hands of the county magistrates, and the proposal of the Government is to put it in the hands of a Joint Committee of the County Council and the magistrates. A demand has been made to entrust the control of the police entirely to the County Council; and I observe that in some parts of the country, where a great disposition has not been generally found in favour of vast changes of machinery—such as those of certain Chambers of Agriculture—resolutions have been carried by small majorities in favour of transferring the control of the police entirely to the County Council. The hon. and learned Member for North West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton), in a speech of great ability, argued in favour of the control of the police being taken back and placed entirely under the Home Secretary. The real issue before the House in respect of this matter of police lies, however, between the proposal of the Government and the proposal to hand over their control entirely to a Committee of the County Council, and, in my opinion, the argument in favour of the latter course is so strong, that I confess I think the Government will find very great difficulty in meeting and defeating it. You have some experience to go upon, because you have your municipalities. You have not been able to entrust the Municipal Corporations with the management of the Poor Law, but you have been able to entrust them with the management of the police; and those bodies have organized and managed the police almost without reflection upon the excellence and adequacy of their management. I cannot recollect an instance of any considerable borough ever having been made the subject of censure in respect of the unsatisfactory management of its police. Hitherto it has been managed through the Watch Committee and the Council of the borough. If that be so, the Government will have extreme difficulty in saying that they cannot trust a Watch Committee of the County Council as they had hitherto trusted the Watch Committees of municipal boroughs. Yet I think there is reason for saying that such a body cannot be trusted as well as a Town Council, and that reason arises from the fact that the County Council will be elected in a totally different manner from a Municipal Corporation. You must remember that the County Council will be unique in its method of election. You are going to have those members elected for single-member seats, and all are to be elected together every three years, not, as in Town Councils, by thirds every year; they are all to be elected to single-membered seats and at the same time. Therefore, the experience of Town Councils cannot, without much qualification and hesitation, be made to apply to the forecast of what the County Councils will do. We have seen of late what a little agitation and excitement about the action of the police might do. I believe that the agitation which took place a short time ago has had an important bearing on the return of a Member to this House. There was a vacancy in a Midland city, and a well-known Member went down to speak in favour of the Liberal candidate. On his return, he was asked what the people of the locality appeared to be most interested in. "Well," he replied, "I do not know; I did not go into general subjects; I only talked of Miss Cass." At any rate, a Liberal candidate was returned where a Conservative Member held the seat before. There must at times be imprudence, sometimes worse than imprudence, on the part of police; and I would ask the House to consider what would be the position of the County Council, who would have the police under their control, if every member of it, on a particular day, had to go to his constituents for re-election—with a question raging in the constituency as to the conduct of the police? They might all be turned out in a body. I am not disposed to regard with satisfaction the sweeping clean of all the elected members at once, thus getting rid of all the experienced authority, administrative policy, and skill which had been got together. All the good done by the constitution of the Council would be undone, simply because there had been a miscarriage of some particular instance—perhaps, something worse than a miscarriage on the part of the police. Let the popular will in the election of members of the Council be considered by all means; but, if the popular will sweep the County Council away from end to end, it will surely warrant reflection and reconstruction as to whether, after all, the control of the police should be entrusted to a body so composed. The experience of Town Councils does not warrant the conclusion that the County Councils can be trusted, because never more than one-third of the members of a Town Council go out at one time. The elections to Town Councils are bye-elections on a large scale—one-third goes out and two-thirds are left, so that you still have the element of permanent bodies. On the other hand the County Councils would be elected *en bloc*, in such a fashion that the whole strength of any agitation might be brought to bear upon a particular contest. In the contest for every single seat the particular issue agitating the public mind would be brought in, and every seat might be affected by its introduction. The danger of emotional elections is a danger anywhere, but do not aggravate it, do not let the wave of opinion and the current of feeling flowing at the moment through the constituency be omnipotent, so as to be able to sweep the deck clean and put in an entirely new crew to displace those who held seats on the Council before. I have referred to the matter of the police, but there are other questions which might be raised in the same way, and which might control and influence the elections. The Bill proposes to create a County of London, and it proposes to entrust to that County the whole functions of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Now I approve entirely of the creation of a County of London, and I think it should exercise the functions of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but here, again, can we regard with equanimity and complete assurance what would be the effect on the composition of a

County Council for London, if in an excitable constituency like London there arose immediately before a General Election some questions which stirred the newspapers and animated the public mind. I might go on to other subjects, the importance of which as soon as realized must impress hon. Members with the necessity of taking care that the County Council should have in it some element of stability, experience, knowledge, and independence. You are going, not by this Bill, but in the future, to give to the County Councils great powers in respect of education—it may not be in respect of primary education, but intermediate education, which has been awaiting the construction of a new system of Local Government. The Endowed School Commissioners, who instituted their inquiry 20 years ago, said in their Report—"With respect to the future administration of these endowments we look to the creation of a County Body which shall supervise and direct their administration." If that be so, what sort of element must you have in your County Council? We know how in this House the course of educational reform has been diverted and changed of recent years by submitting to the House questions, more or less exactly and accurately stated, as to the rights of the poor, and their share in endowments set apart for higher education. Can you then be certain of having County Councils as you propose to elect them, that will be able to administer these endowments. Is it not likely that if the administration of these trusts is put in the hands of the County Body such as this Bill proposes to constitute, it will become the sport of elections, of accidents, and of any cry that may be raised on the eve of the General Election. My right hon. Friend the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) spoke of other questions, such as that of health and the sanitary requirements of the people; but there is a question which has been often of more pressing importance at the present moment, and which hon. Members may be surprised that I have not mentioned already. It is a question which in most minds will put aside all others when the election of members of the County Councils comes to be a matter of immediate necessity—I mean the question of temperance. What would be the position when an election is about to take place if the question of temperance is, above all others, animating and exciting the electorate? In every division there will be a struggle between the temperance man and the brewer. In some places the temperance man will be the victor, and in other places the brewer. Counties are frequently homogeneous; so that the same feeling rules there from end to end. In one county all the divisions would return temperance men, and in another the friends of the brewer would be returned. I think this would be a very bad mode of settling this very important question, whichever form proved to be the result in the County Council when it assembles. I hope and trust that whenever this question of temperance and temperance reform is brought before the Council there will be found some men on it who are neither brewers' nominees nor members of the United Kingdom Alliance—members who will be able to bring to a solution of this most difficult question, considerations, feelings, and thoughts, uncontrolled by one or the other of these great competing bodies. I consider that there can be nothing worse for the permanent settlement of the matter than entrusting it to Councils constituted as the Councils are proposed to be constituted under this Bill, in which complete predominance may be given to one party or the other, and in which every member elected may owe his election to the view he takes upon a particular question. I dare say that several Members who have been listening to me will have said —"But you have left out altogether the selected members; you forget that we are going to ally with the elected members another body of members; we associate them with the elected members as a necessary element, and these are the persons who will bring to the County Councils the elements which you insist upon and which may not be afforded by the result of a popular election." Now, I have not forgotten this matter of the selected members. The hon. and learned Attorney General, in his speech the other night, drew a pretty picture of the way in which they are to be chosen and taken on to the Board. He conceived a body of pure patriots, whose minds would be free from beer or temperance, who would collect together and look through their own ranks and note their own deficiencies, and then, searching outside, say—"This is the man" and "that is the man" necessary to complete the assembled wisdom of the country. It is a very pretty picture, but it is not in the least warranted in experience. We have got selected members already, and I am surprised that attention has not already been drawn to the fact. In the Town Councils there are selected members after an election has taken place, selected by the simple process of a majority vote. Most frequently, when the members of the Council proceed to elect aldermen, they are willing to do a good turn to some members of their own body and give them an extended tenure of place. That is what they do under the present system; but what is proposed under this Bill is something which partly agrees with that proceeding, but in a very material degree it differs from it altogether. It may be said that a Town Council having been popularly elected, proceeds to the election of aldermen; and it is not necessary that a town councillor should be nominated, nor was it intended that he should be so. As a matter of fact, however, that practice is followed. Perhaps, better things are expected from the County Councils, and that, as the hon. and learned Attorney General said, they will go outside and bring in outsiders. When the election of a Town Council has taken place, as a general rule, they elect as aldermen members of their own body. What follows? Certain vacancies are created, and they are filled up by popular elections; but, according to this Bill, that will not be the process. You are going to give the elected members power, first of all, to take one-fourth of their own body and make them selected members, and then they are to have the power of filling up the vacant places from outside. That is a most extraordinary proposition —a proposition which, once stated, can scarcely, I think, be seriously maintained. I agree that there may be some convenience in it in regard to the filling up of casual vacancies. The experience of the London School Board shows that. There vacancies were filled, in the first instance, by popular election; but it was found that the method was expensive, and the inexpensive system of co-option was introduced, and it is a remarkable fact, as showing the fairness with which elections at a London School Board, and, I believe, at most school boards throughout the country, are controlled, that although the remaining members are able to fill up a casual vacancy and may be of a different opinion from the person who has vacated the seat, yet the majority has invariably selected a member of the minority when a vacancy was caused in the minority. [*Cries of* "No!"] That is the case in London. ["No!"]

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): No; not in Liverpool and Nottingham.

Mr. COURTNEY: Well, it is my observation as to London. Of course, it may be different in Nottingham.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS: I may point out that, although that might have been formerly the case in regard to the London School Board, yet the practice has been departed from this year.

Mr. COURTNEY: I am sorry to hear it. It was a somewhat remarkable fact that when casual vacancies arose, the majority chose for the vacancy a man of the same feelings, although he might belong to the minority. I did not know that there had been a departure from that rule. If there has been, I regret it; and I hope that a better system will be followed in future by returning to the system which originally prevailed. And now let me call attention to the extraordinary result which has followed from the adoption of the single member system in reference to the election of Members of the House of Commons. I dare say that one hon. Member present, my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), will feel some surprise that, in speaking of the results of elections of single membered seats, I have not pointed out this consequence, that it may easily happen that a majority of the electors may secure a minority of seats. That is a very remarkable fact, which I hope hon. Members will endeavour to realize. Let me suppose that there are three seats—three wards, side by side. In Ward A, the Liberals may have a majority of 3,000; in Ward B, the Conservatives may have a majority of 1,000; and in Ward C, the Conservatives may also have a majority of 1,000; yet for the three wards two Conservatives would be elected, and one Liberal, although, on the whole three seats, the Liberals would have a majority of 1,000 electors. That is not a fancy picture, but what has really happened in the representation of certain large towns in this Parment under the operation of single seats. The very first Election which took place to this Parliament resulted in the return for Leeds of three Conservatives against two Liberals, although the Liberal vote was much larger than the other. This might easily happen under the plan of this Bill. Well, we start from that. There are, say, 48 members returned, and they may be 25 on one side, and 23 on the other, the 25 really representing the minority. We give the 25 power to add 12—that is possible—and that is the result, as everyone knows, from the experience of municipal elections, and that result obtained by mere chance, in the first instance, may be secured so as to give the minority a predominance for years and years to come. This has happened in Town Councils, although the operation of this method of selection is much less powerful in those Councils than it would be under the proposed County Councils; but although it is much less powerful and is worked under much greater restrictions, I may appeal to experience, where, in some half-a-dozen municipalities in the country—Leeds, Liverpool, Bristol, Exeter, and others—the minority, as the result of one victory so obtained at an earlier election, had been able to maintain a Conservative or a Liberal majority unbroken down to the present time. As soon as you have selected 12 members, six of whom remain permanently, you secure a majority, because the six members will be there to turn the balance, and to proceed to the election of another six. This is what will be secured under the present plan. I will not enlarge further on this point of the possibility of the majority of a Council being generally in conflict with popular opinion; because the experience we have makes me doubt very much whether the system could be maintained. Let me appeal to a case which will probably happen more frequently. Take the case of 48 elected members, 28 of whom represented the majority and 20 the minority. The 28 would elect 12 others, which would at once give them 40. According to popular election the majority was seven to five, but by introducing the present system, the majority is increased to two to one. There is this immense distinction between these elections and Town Council elections—that here you will have the whole body of elected members returned at once, and the conflict between the elected and the remaining members is presented in the most aggravated form possible. You will have the selected members able to turn the scale; the consequence is that you are creating a machinery which will be subjected to considerable abuse, whenever it is brought into operation, and will be subjected to considerable attack wherever it does anything except increase the power of the majority. If the machinery is to be left part of the organization at all, you must at least take care that the selected members shall be so selected as to represent and correspond with the conditions of the elected members, so that, instead of 12 being altogether elected by the 28 who compose the majority of the 48 elected members, the 28 may be able to secure seven of them, and the 20 forming the minority five. Introduce proportional representation in connection with the selected members and you may possibly keep the selected members; but according to the present system selected members constitute an outrage of an intolerable character when they turn the scale, and they are of little use if they do not turn the scale. This House is a House which may be said to be elected by single membered constituencies. Just consider what would have been said in regard to this House in 1868, when the Liberal Party were in a great majority, or in 1874, when the Conservative Party were in a majority; what would have been the feeling if, when the election was completed and the elected Members appeared at the door, they were confronted by a number of Members numerous enough to turn the scale? Why it would be intolerable. The Conservative Majority of 1874 was upset in 1880. What would have been the feelings of the victors of 1880 if they had come to the House and found in it a number of remaining Members able to turn the balance against what was the popular verdict? Yet this is the inevitable risk you run of thus upsetting the balance of popular judgment by keeping to this system of selected members. That is the mischief you produce. If you are going to keep it at all, I think that under certain safeguards it might be rendered useful. For instance, it might be the means of enabling men to be brought in who, through some lack of temperament, the failings of age, or some other disability, found themselves unequal to the tumults and the anxieties, the worry and the toil of a popular election. If they could be brought in by those who are elected in the same proportion, it might give a useful addition to the body so constituted, but in order that it might be proved useful, you must not alter the balance of Parties; they must be supplementary members introduced in due proportion to those already there. By that means you would not alter the proportion of the Bodies, but would secure the presence of persons who might add wisdom and power to the Governing Council. Is it not plain that the plan of election you propose to set up is a plan which would be insufficient to afford materials for grappling with all the problems of the future. You confess that by the introduction of selected members, because you confess that the elected members are not persons on whom you can rely. You know that the system of election, the new body of single membered seats, will not give you what you want, and you try to make up their defects by other machinery. Why do you not revert to the simpler plan which is open to your adoption—a plan which in principle has already been incorporated in the educational machinery of the country, and a plan which would secure in the first connection the real representation of the people? You have all the elements at hand. Bring all of them you can into the body you are going to construct as the County Council. Do not excise any of them. They are all there, they can be brought in, and will give all the stability and experience you want for the County Council. Under such a plan you will have men capable of doing an unpopular thing, or of saying an unpopular thing; because they would know that they were sustained by outside voters who, if they were not a majority of the whole electorate, would yet be able to secure their election, and on whom they might rely on being sent back again to do their duty in the County Council. If I could impress hon. Members with any sense not only of the importance, but of the necessity and simplicity of the system I advocate, if I could convince them that what they are more or less searching for lies at their door, I am sure they would not hesitate to receive it with open minds and even be glad that it has been brought before them. As far as I have known, wherever I have gone in town or country, among the most popular and miscellaneous audiences, I have recommended this method of securing in the Governing Bodies of the future, whether it be in the House of Commons or the County Council, representatives of all forms of thought, of experience, of reflection, as well as of character and independence, and it has been received as a real solution of a difficulty which had oppressed many minds, and as a real salvation from dangers which many had apprehended. Mr. John Stuart Mill, in speaking of this subject, after a life spent in public affairs and devoted to the examination of public questions, declared that it opened up to him a new promise for the future. In the work of reconstructing our local life, out of which our public life must grow and develop, let the Government and the House be not afraid to open their minds to processes which will secure beyond all doubt in the future the maintenance of the best elements that have been at work in the past. People are alarmed about the disestablishment of the squirearchy and the advantages which will be given to democracy. I admit the democratic principle of this Bill; but at the same time I object to the Bill, not because it is too democratic, but because it is not democratic enough. The system I plead for secures for everyone an interest in the government of the country to which he belongs; it secures the majority in their power, and does not deprive the minority of their just influence. You would be guarding against the danger of sudden and unreflecting waves of opinion, and you might be secured in the possession of wisdom, experience, and knowledge. The democracy would be supreme, but it would be a democracy reflecting the whole community; and small and great, rich and poor, the squire and farmer, and the labourer may all expect to be thrown in. If this is of importance in respect of the problem to which I have been addressing myself, is it not of infinitely greater importance in connection with that other problem which can never be far off from the minds of hon. Members when they are considering this Bill? This is a Bill dealing with Local Government in England and Wales. Have you thought what would be the future of Local Government in Ireland? You must be prepared for that. If you think you are going to put it off indefinitely, I, for one, would strenuously oppose its indefinite postponement. We must and shall give some form of Local Government to the Sister Isle. It depends on the lines on which you are going to proceed for the Local Government Bill for England and Wales, how you are to proceed in relation to Ireland. And if the question is of importance here, where the people have from long traditions been trained in habits of self-government, and where there is a consciousness on the whole of unison of feeling and thought as between the governing and governed; if here we are in danger of losing, as I fear we are in the future, the maintenance of those elements of stability and strength on which we have had to rely in the past, what does the Government expect will be the result in Ireland if they proceed to legislate for Ireland on similar lines? It is not difficult to make the alternative. The Bill which is before us can easily be reconstructed so as to be drawn on the lines I have suggested. A few alterations may be made, or one or two clauses to provide that instead of dividing the county area into single-membered seats, the county should be divided into divisions returning three or more. Introduce that provision, and provide further that in such divisions each elector shall have one vote and one vote only. You would then have secured all I have ventured to suggest. Let not the Government resist or be guilty of this great refusal. The remedy is at their hand if they have the strength and courage to seize it, and they will then be able to say in passing the Bill that they have, indeed, done something to reconstruct upon safe and promising lines the rural public life of England.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I propose, with the favour of the House, to make a few remarks upon the general features of this Bill, and in these circumstances I will not attempt to follow at any length the very eloquent and interesting speech to which we have just listened. My hon. Friend is an advocate of proportional representation, and he advocates his views with a courage which I venture to think is worthy of a better cause. I confess, for myself, I have never been able to treat his proposal as very serious. It has appeared to me that the various schemes which he has suggested might be extremely interesting scientific experiments to be carried out by the Fellows of the Royal Society, but that they are totally unfitted for the rough and tumble of our political and municipal life. I confess I could not follow with acquiescence some of the illustrations which he gave in support of his views. My hon. Friend gave a history, which I think is of very apocryphal value, of the proceedings in connection with the Medical Relief Bill, and he said that many prominent Members on this (the Front Opposition Bench) voted in favour of that Bill, although their inclinations——

MR. COURTNEY: No, no! What I said was that on that occasion prominent Members of the Opposition Bench kept away whose inclinations would have led them to vote against the Bill.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I accept the explanation, or rather the correction, of my hon. Friend. I understand him to say that on that occasion prominent Members of the Front Opposition Bench kept away whose inclination would have led them to vote against the Bill. But that is not altogether an exceptional fact. I think the House will recollect other occasions on which prominent Members have stayed away, or even voted for a Bill against which they had strong objections. But my hon. Friend will not alter that by any system of proportional representation. In the particular case to which he alludes, however, I think he is mistaken in saying that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was against the principle of the Bill; as a matter of fact, I think the right hon. Gentleman was in favour of the Bill, and supported it and voted for it. But the real facts of this case were that the great majority of this House was in favour of the Bill, and so also was the great majority of the people outside, and what my hon. Friend wishes to introduce is a system by which the views of the majority shall not be put into practice. But we are told that we are creating a new and special difficulty in the present instance, in that the system of voting introduced by this measure is a unique system, because the members of the Council will be elected by single-member districts, and all at once. I think my hon. Friend is mistaken with respect to the first point. Practically, election to municipal councils is also by single-member districts. Birmingham, for instance, is divided into wards, each of which returns three members, but only one at a time, who is voted for by all the voters in the ward; it is, therefore, as if the town were divided into single-member districts. The other point is an important one, and if it be raised in Committee I think that attention might well be given to it. For my own part, I should prefer that in the case of the counties, as in the towns, one-third of the members should go out each year. I believe that by that means continuity of work and opinion is preserved; I believe that the system has worked extremely well in the Town Councils, and I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will give the question his favourable consideration when it is raised in Committee. But the complaint I make against the speech of my hon. Friend is that it is not so much a speech in favour of proportional or any other form of representation, as a speech against the principle on which the whole of our popular representative government is based. The speech is one that might with great propriety have been made before the Reform Bill of 1832. My hon. Friend is always in the belief that the majority of the people are inclined to go wrong—that the majority of the people do not know what is best for them—and, in these circumstances, he wants to secure some plan by which superior persons of prominence and ability—who are not popular enough to get elected—shall get upon the Council. In the course of previous discussions a great deal has been said about the necessity for the prolongation of this debate in order to enlighten the constituencies. Well, I confess I cannot help thinking that the anxiety to enlighten the constituencies is quite unnecessary; in my opinion, the constituencies have already formed a very clear opinion as to the merits and the general scope of this Bill, and are prepared to give to it a hearty and warm reception. I confess, when I look at the reports of this discussion now appearing in the provincial newspapers, that I do not see that the minute and at the same time rather vague and inconsistent criticism to which this Bill is subjected, is calculated to afford much instruction or enlightenment to the country. Before the Bill was introduced there was one point upon which public opinion was clearly concentrated; people wished to know what was to be the constitution of the new Authorities which were about to be created. It was upon this rock that previous Bills had split; they had been considered totally inadequate and insufficient in this respect, and the question in everybody's mind was whether the new Local Authorities were to be fully, frankly, and completely popular and representative. That is the main point. I think that now there is no doubt as to the answer which will be given to this question. There was a feeling that since we had equalized the franchise in counties and boroughs, and secured to the counties identity of political rights, we were also bound to secure to them, as far as possible, identity of municipal privileges; and the desire of the great majority of those who wished to see a reform in Local Government was that the system which by common consent had worked so admirably in the towns, and which was so greatly directed to promoting local patriotism, should be extended to the counties. There can be no doubt that that has now been done—in this Bill the rights and privileges which are enjoyed in the boroughs are frankly and freely conceded to the counties; and, in these circumstances, I have no hesitation in saying that I welcome the Bill as fulfilling most amply the pledges which the Government has given, and as laying the foundation of a great reform which I believe will be fraught with great and beneficial consequences. Three years ago it was my duty to prepare a Bill upon the same subject. It was never completed or submitted to the House, because the Government of the day thought it right to throw aside that measure, with all the other items of the programme upon which they had been elected, in order to take up a new programme upon which the country had not been consulted. But my experience, at any rate, enabled me to appreciate the complexity of the subject, and I most cordially add my congratulations to those which have come from every quarter to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for the skill, the ability, and the courage with which he has dealt with the matter. If I were able to place my own draft side by side with the present Bill, I think it would be found that in the main principles there was an entire agreement; no doubt, there are notable differences on some rather important points of detail, but I am not perfectly certain that the advantage is always on the side of my draft. In those circumstances, then, I rejoice to see the introduction of this Bill; I wish it well, and I will do nothing to protract its discussion or delay it. I was anxious to know the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman who leads what is called the legitimate Opposition with regard to the matter. I confess I have been amused—and I hope edified—by recent disclosures. When the Bill was first introduced it was met with a chorus of congratulation. It was acknowledged to be comprehensive, and by many admitted to be a thoroughly radical measure. But the lapse of time, it appears, has somewhat modified this favourable impression. I wonder whether it was the lapse of time, or whether it was certain proceedings to which some publicity has been given, which took place in one of the Committee Rooms of this House? It would be very interesting to see the private communications which have passed between the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), who was president of this meeting of followers who aspired to lead and supporters who were very unwilling to support. It appears that hitherto these communications have not resulted in a perfect agreement. I find that in the meeting to which I have referred this Bill was described as perilous, as invidious, a Tory measure with a democratic veneer, faulty in its structure, and perfectly worthless to the agricultural labourer. But if that be a true description of the Bill, it is the bounden duty of those hon. Members who hold that view to meet it frankly with undoubted hostility, without further hesitation, and they ought to do all that is in their power to cause its rejection. I will do them the justice to say that they are doing a good deal against the Bill. They do not frankly move that it be read this day six months, but they meet it with an Amendment which shows that if afraid to strike they are willing to wound, and which would be equally fatal to the Bill if it were passed by the House. But, at all events, the opposition of these irreconcilables is intelligible and fairly consistent. But I find that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) the other night, in a most moderate speech and one which must have been gratifying to the Government, although he made some fair criticisms upon it, yet said that he was in favour of its principles, and admitted that it was a broad and comprehensive measure, and that, as far as he and his immediate Friends were concerned, they did not intend to propose any Amendment to the second reading which would be fatal to the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] I am glad to see my right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) takes the same view; but when he comes to speak will the right hon. Gentleman say whether they are going to support the Amendment which has been proposed behind them—that of the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. Stevenson)? Because, if so, they are going to do their best to destroy a Bill to which they have not proposed any second reading Amendments, and of principles of which they express complete approval. If they do that, then all I can say is that we shall know perfectly well where is the motive power of the legitimate Opposition; we shall look for it below the Gangway, and we shall know at last that the tail has effectually wagged the dog. I hope that my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax will be too consistent to take any such course. I expect, therefore, to see that Amendment supported only by the Gentlemen who attended the meeting presided over by the hon. Member for West Bradford; but I must point out that the course he himself proposes to take is almost as fatal to the Bill, because my right hon. Friend proposes not to meet the Bill with direct opposition, but to smother it with kindness. My right hon. Friend has told us that the Bill involves a most comprehensive and drastic reform, and I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said it was the largest measure of reform which had been brought in by any Government for a long time. We have been told again and again that the consideration of this complex measure in its present stage demands weeks of discussion; that there are in it proposals which amount to several Bills. My right hon. Friend proposed, however, that we should add to it the consolidation of rates, the simplification of boundaries, the organization of parishes, and the administration of the Poor Laws, each in itself sufficient to occupy a considerable time in a Session. I agree with my right hon. Friend that no scheme of Local Government would be complete which did not deal satisfactorily with all these subjects; but I say they are outside this Bill, they are independent of this Bill, they can be just as well dealt with after this Bill has been passed. The House is not committed to any opinion on either of these subjects; and, therefore, I think the Government have been very wise in not overloading the ship, which has already a very heavy burden to carry. As regards the question of the consolidation of rates, I believe that to be a most important and desirable thing; it produces economy, and is likely to produce greater efficiency. But I understand the President of the Local Government Board to say that the Government are prepared to bring in a separate Bill to deal with this matter. [Mr. RITCHIE: Hear, hear!] I think it would be desirable that such a Bill should be brought in while we are dealing with the measure before us. But I do not think it should form part of the measure. Then there is the question of the simplification of boundaries, and I do not know that I agree with my right hon. Friend's view of the matter. It is a question which raises more local feeling than any other, and it would be very unwise to attempt to deal with it in this Bill. It would, in my opinion, be better to leave the matter to the County Councils when you have established them. They will have the local knowledge, they will understand local feeling, and will be able to deal with the subject in such a manner as to be satisfactory to the parties concerned; whereas, if an unwieldy body like the House of Commons, necessarily ignorant of local circumstances, were to take the question up there would be endless heartburning and dissatisfaction. Then we come to the question of the administration of the Poor Law. That is the most important of all the omissions to which reference has been made. I think there is a great deal to be said for the inclusion of Poor Law administration in the work to be given to the new County Councils, otherwise you will have a state of things anomalous in a high degree, which no one can look upon as permanent. You will have, on the one hand, thoroughly representative popular Councils dealing with local government, sanitation, and other important matters, and their work would constantly increase—for, of course, there will be a tendency to throw all new work on the Councils—and, on the other hand, you will have a body elected by an antiquated process dealing with a considerable expenditure and an important branch of local administration. Therefore, very shortly after the passing of this Bill, I think there will be an overwhelming demand for greater simplicity and unification. I should have been very glad had the Government seen their way to include the administration of the Poor Law in the Bill; but, after all, we must admit that all that the Government have undertaken to do in this Bill is to assimilate county to borough government, and though we have had borough government of a very satisfactory nature for more than 50 years, yet the work of the Poor Law had been during all that time kept separate from ordinary municipal work. Therefore, though I believe it would be a good thing in both cases to unify the work, I cannot condemn this Bill because it does not do more in this respect for county than has been done for borough government. There is one little matter to which I would call the attention of the President of the Local Government Board with reference to Poor Law administration. At present the Guardians pay the school fees for the children of parents who are unable to pay, and great objection was taken to it at the time when it was proposed. It was felt to be bad in every way to connect education with the Poor Law. Parents who have learnt their way to the Board of Guardians for the education of their children are pretty apt to find their way there for other purposes; and, therefore, I think it would be a very good thing if at this time the Government could see their way to hand this matter over to the local Councils. Then, as to the question of the organization of the parish. My right hon. Friend went so far as to say that, in his opinion, the parish ought to be the first unit of Local Government. If that is his view, I do not agree with him, and it is inconsistent with what the Liberal Party have done in the past, and with the valuable legislation which we owe to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Stansfeld) himself. My right hon. Friend was the author of the measure which has given us our urban and rural sanitary authorities. Therefore it would be a retrograde step to give to the parish what a few years ago we felt the parish would be unfit to perform. What are the duties which my right hon. Friend would propose that parish councils should perform? Does he mean to give them the sanitary work? Then, if he does, he would come into conflict with the right hon. Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) who criticized what was done, and complained that the sanitary work was not sufficiently centralized and not sufficiently under control, and pointed out that the parish authorities were only too content with their nuisances. I agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for South Leeds that nothing could be more certain to bring about inefficient sanitary government than to make the parish the first unit in the new local sanitary system. In some cases the areas are too vast, in the majority of cases they are too small, for any efficient local authority; and if the view of my right hon. Friend is to be taken the first thing the House would have to do is to cut the parishes into pieces, and of the old parochial system, which the House is called upon to respect, nothing would remain but the name. But, though I do not go so far as my right hon. Friend, I think there are reasons for wishing that something should be done to give some sort of organization even to the existing parishes. I would urge that, not because I think there is a very important work which they have to do, but because it would be a political education for those who had to take part in the work. I do not agree with gentlemen who have said that the labourer would take no interest in the matter. I believe he would take the greatest possible interest both in the election of the local District Council and the County Council. But, no doubt, if you could give him something nearer home, something more local and direct, it would be materially to his advantage, and I confess I think it might be possible to give some better organization to the Vestry—some more popular organization. If in one or two respects the organization of the Vestry were changed, you might very safely entrust such a body with the management of purely parochial charities and parochial allotments, with the duty of protecting the footpaths in the parish, open spaces, and waste commons. I believe if work of that kind could be found the labourers would most gladly undertake it, and that it would be a beneficial education to all concerned. I have now gone through the principal sins of omission charged against the Bill, and I have only to repeat that it must be a matter for the Government to consider how far any one of them can properly be added to the enormous bulk of this Bill. They certainly do not, in my opinion, in any way touch its merits. The absence from the Bill of proposals for the consolidation of the rates, the simplification of boundaries, and the rest ought not, therefore, to be an excuse for destroying it. But now I come to certain alleged sins of commission. The first point is the proposal for selected councillors. I have been perfectly astonished at the opposition to the proposal. Some of the critics do not appear to be aware of the existence of aldermen. I lay it down that the Bill is to be tested by this, how far it does really and practically assimilate the new county to the old borough system. The institution of aldermen has given great satisfaction. [*Cries of* "No, no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] Well, I am a tolerably impartial witness, because personally I am opposed to the system, and, if it were proposed to be changed, I would support the change. At the same time, there is a great difference of opinion on the subject, and there are many who seem quite prepared to believe that this provision is a most important one and will work extremely well, although, like many other things, it may be liable to abuse. But it cannot be denied that, in the vast majority of cases, the election of aldermen does secure the presence of experienced men in the Council, and of many men who, having done a great deal of public work, are unwilling to undergo the continual fatigue and annoyance of public election. But whether the system is good or bad, it seems to me that it should be dealt with as a whole. The first thing we have to do is to assimilate the two systems, and then, if there is any point in which they can be improved, let us make the improvement in both at the same time. I should like, however, to make one representation on this point to Her Majesty's Government. I dislike very much the name of selected Councillors. The name "selected" is an invidious one, and will have a tendency to create opposition between selected and elected Councillors. I therefore beg to suggest that the old name of alderman should be preserved, and that there should be county aldermen as well as borough aldermen. Then comes the question of the control of the police. The arrangement which the Government has proposed is admittedly a compromise, and, like most compromises, I doubt whether it will satisfy either Party. I say frankly that certainly it does not satisfy me. Again, applying to this proposal the test I have applied to all the other proposals I have been considering, the Government have been creating a difference in this case, and it is the only important difference in the Bill, to the disadvantage of the County Councils as opposed to those of the boroughs. The borough Councils have administered the police with signal efficiency, and I believe that no serious complaint has ever been made against that administration. I cannot, therefore, understand why we cannot safely entrust to bodies, which would be so dignified and so important as the new County Councils, the power which has been entrusted to the boroughs for more than 50 years without a single complaint being raised with regard to it. There is, I know, one objection to my proposal on this point which I do not like to pass over—namely, that if we give the control of the police to the County Councils in England we shall have to give it hereafter to the County Councils in Ireland. I say frankly that that is not a prospect that greatly alarms me. I am in favour of giving the control of the police to all popularly elected bodies in Ireland as well as in England, and I believe that the adoption of such a course would have a good effect. I believe that the responsibility which we should thereby throw upon the elected bodies would conduce to good order and to peace in Ireland. I do not say that we might not be compelled, perhaps, in the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, to have for a while an Imperial police in Ireland for Imperial purposes, but I am speaking now of police for purely municipal work, the control of which I think might safely be entrusted to local bodies both in Ireland and England. What I wish to point out to those who object to this view is that there is no logical ground for saying that we are bound to have identity of legislation for the three countries. That has never been contended for by even the most extreme of the Irish Members. [Mr. MUNDELLA: "Oh, oh!"] My right hon. Friend says "Oh, oh!" but I will go further and say that there is not one of the most extreme of the Irish Members who will not repudiate the idea of identity of legislation for the three countries with contempt. I do not say that I think that it would be a bad thing to have such identity of legislation, but until Irish Members are willing to have identical land legislation, idential educational legislation, and identical financial legislation, I do not think they are at all likely to consider it to be essential that there should be identity of legislation with regard to Local Government. I hope when we come to discuss the subject of the control of the police in Committee, the Government may be willing to concede something in the direction I have indicated. If, however, they do not see their way to do this, but feel it necessary to hold firm to the compromise they now have acted upon, then no doubt it will be my duty to vote against them on this point, but certainly I do not think it is one which seriously detracts from the other merits of the Bill. The last question is that of the licensing clauses; and I should like to ask the Government what is their intention with regard to these clauses. Do they intend to stand by them? I ask this question because I noticed in the speech of the President of the Local Government Board that the right hon. Gentleman appeared to put forward these clauses as an offer made by the Government to the Temperance Party, and to indicate that it was possible if that Party did not accept them the Government would wash their hands of all responsibility and would be inclined to withdraw them. If that is the position of the Government with regard to these clauses, the House ought to know it. The House ought to know for certain whether the Government regard these clauses as essential, and whether or not they propose to stand by them. I will assume that the Government do intend to stand by them, and upon that assumption I will ask the hon. Baronet the Member for Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and his Friends to reconsider the attitude which the organization with which they are connected have taken up in reference to these clauses. It has been objected, in the first place, that the transfer of the licences from the Imperial to the Local Authority would give the latter an interest in a traffic which is injurious and objectionable. I cannot help thinking that the hon. Baronet and those who think with him have not really the courage of their opinions and sufficient faith in their cause when they put forward such an argument. If this traffic is, as they say, an evil traffic, if to get rid of it is an advantage to the district concerned, if they are satisfied that they will at once convince the majority in many districts of these facts, and probably in the long run the majority in all districts, why should they be afraid of these clauses? Surely, if this is an immoral traffic, it is immoral to take any pecuniary benefit from it, and nothing can be more immoral than that a local district should get rid of the traffic within its area and at the same time get from Imperial taxation a benefit from that traffic. What the hon. Baronet and those who agree with him appear to urge is that, in fact, a bribe should be given to the people of a district in order to induce them to get rid of the traffic. The second objection to these clauses is, perhaps, a more serious one. It is contained in the Amendment of which the hon. Baronet has given Notice, and it is taken to the compensation proposed to be given to the publicans the renewal of whose licences is to be refused. I understand that the hon. Baronet maintains that, according to legal decisions, a licence does not imply a vested interest, and therefore that a publican whose licence is refused has no legal claim to compensation. That view is undoubtedly disputed by considerable legal authority, and I believe that it will be found on inquiry that the highest legal authorities have been consulted by more than one Government, and that their opinion has been that there is an undoubted vested right in a licence. But, be that as it may, there is certainly great doubt upon the point, and for my own part I do not see my way to dispute the equitable claim to compensation which the publicans have. The publicans hold a property which has a marketable value and in which they have invested a considerable sum. They are, at all events, conducting a legal traffic over which the Legislature has, to a certain extent, thrown its shield and protection, and they cannot be fairly and properly deprived of their means of livelihood without giving them compensation. All precedent would be against our adopting such a course. Parliament has compensated almost every other conceivable interest, many of which had less claims to compensation than the publicans have. Thus Parliament awarded compensation in the case of Army Purchase, in which the vested interest set up was distinctly illegal and which had grown up in defiance of the law. I do not believe that the hon. Baronet will ever persuade the majority of the people of this country that it will be fair to deprive publicans of their property and their livelihood without giving them compensation. I want the hon. Baronet to understand the advantages which he and his Friends would gain if this Bill were passed. In the first place, the principle of Local Option, which he has so long and so unselfishly contended for, would be accepted and practically applied under this Bill. There is no doubt in my mind that under this Bill the majority of the inhabitants of any licensing district who will elect representatives to the County Council will have the power to do away with every licence in the district if they think fit. It is true that there are conditions in the Bill; but I am satisfied that in the vast majority of instances the licensing district will have the power I have indicated. That is a most important advance, such as I think no Government has ever proposed in the direction of the hon. Baronet's contention, and I do not think that it ought to be rejected without very grave consideration. The second point is that the County Council under this Bill can, if so minded, close public-houses on Sundays and holidays. That is a most important thing in itself, and as it deals with a matter continually agitated in this country it is important as a precedent; and I have no doubt that if the exercise of this power is found to work well, still greater power will be given to County Councils in the future to deal with other occasions on which they might see fit either to shorten the hours or to close public-houses altogether. Thirdly, under this Bill no new vested interest can arise. The holder of any licence granted after this Bill is passed will have no claim to compensation in respect to it. Fourthly, compensation, if there is to be compensation, is fixed on a very fair and moderate basis. I venture to think that anyone who has a practical acquaintance with the subject will say that to give compensation based on the present value of the licence, or upon the difference between the value of the house as used for ordinary purposes and with its licence attached, is an extremely fair proposal, and one which will give a more moderate sum to the publican than would be awarded him by any other method. And, lastly, there is a point of extreme importance. The compensation which would have to be paid in the Bill would largely come out of the pockets of the publicans themselves. The County Councils would have the power to add 20 per cent to the licences. That would bring in if generally applied £300,000 per annum, which might be used for the purpose of decreasing the number of licences; and the only suggestion I make to the Government is that it might be well that this money should be earmarked—[Mr. RITCHIE: Hear, hear!]—that it should be distinctly applied to the purpose of reducing licences, and that any sum obtained by the County Council should be carried to the County Council Fund and used for this desirable reduction. If that was done, then an enormous change would take place with reference to this subject, and I am not certain that all would not be done that reasonable and fair-minded men could wish for. In conclusion, I beg my hon. Friend to consider the experience of the Temperance Party in reference to the measure introduced by Lord Aberdare, then Mr. Bruce. The Temperance Party—I was one of them, and I take blame to myself — opposed the Bill and secured its rejection. I believe they made a great mistake; they would have done well to have accepted that Bill. The only result of its rejection has been that for 15 years no step in advance has been taken; and now, if you reject those clauses, I believe it would have the same result, and that for another 15 or 20 years, perhaps, no improvement or amendment would be forthcoming in the direction in which my hon. Friend has so long and so consistently struggled. There are many other questions which I, at all events, shall reserve for disscusion in Committee. There is the financial portion of the Bill, dealt with so ably by my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler). I confess I think he made out a strong *primâ facie* case for the smaller boroughs, and I await with interest the answer which the President of the Local Government Board will make on that subject. But I do not propose to enter into what is really a very complex matter of detail at the present stage. As far as the second reading of the measure is concerned, I give it my hearty support, and I shall vote against any Amendment for the purpose of destroying the Bill and delaying this Reform. There are so many of my hon. Friends who claim to be Representatives of the agricultural labourers that I have some diffidence in speaking in their name; yet I should not hesitate to confidently predict that my hon. Friends will find it very difficult to enlighten the agricultural labourers as to the wisdom of their policy in opposing this Bill. On the other hand, I am convinced that those who support the measure will find their position in the country enormously strengthened by the evidence which the Bill gives that a Unionist Government is both able and willing to deal with great practical questions of legislation which are earnestly desired by the majority of the people, who have been assured again and again that they must be indefinitely delayed to await the introduction of an already discredited and impossible solution of the Irish Question.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, he must decline to deal with the proposals of the hon. Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney) as he considered the Bill already large enough. The Bill naturally divided itself into two parts—the constitution of the new governing bodies and the functions to be entrusted to them. The main and substantial principle of the measure was that the new governing bodies were to be elected on the basis of purely popular representation. He frankly accepted that principle for the reason that, as far as he was aware, or had any knowledge on the subject, it simply gave effect to the policy accepted by the Tory Party as a whole at least three years ago. He was aware that there had been grave complaints—more commonly, he thought, outside the walls of Parliament than in them—against the sweeping and radical changes which were effected by the Bill, and which some hon. Members of the Party regarded as a complete repudiation and renunciation of all the principles hitherto professed by the Tory Party on this subject. It had been said that the duties of Local Government were ably performed by the existing authorities, that it was questionable wisdom to abandon a system which was known to be good and which worked satisfactorily in favour of another system with regard to which it was absolutely impossible to predict; that doubts were entertained whether much was to be gained in point either of efficiency or economy in the new arrangements; that the alteration was more likely to lead to a large increase of expense in future; and that it was doubtful whether we should be able to secure that scrupulous honesty and absolute freedom from anything in the nature of a taint of jobbery or corruption which had been the unquestioned feature in Local Government up to the present time. With regard to all these objections, he had to say that it was too late for any of his hon. Friends to urge them now. If the objections had ever been thought of sufficient weight, their voices ought to have been raised in 1885, because it was in that year that Lord Salisbury, as Prime Minister, announced as a part of the programme of the Tory Party that measures for the reform of Local Government would be introduced on a purely popular basis. Some hon. Gentlemen, himself among them, openly endorsed and supported that principle; others tacitly acquiesced in it and accepted it by their silence; and he did not recollect an instance in which a single Member of the Party openly proclaimed opposition to the views of that time, and which he contended represented the policy of the Party as a whole. He thought, therefore, that it was a little unreasonable and unfair to complain of the extremely radical and revolutionary character of the Bill because a Conservative Government had now come forward three years after the pledge had been given and when they had an opportunity of legislating on the question. He had dwelt on this point because he thought it well that some of those who were loudest in their complaints outside this House should be reminded by an independent Member of the Party of what had actually occurred in reference to this question in the past. He might, however, say that he was glad that the responsibility for the introduction of this Bill had fallen to the lot of the right hon. Gentleman rather than to his own, and he was glad of it for two reasons. In the first place, he was not vain enough to suppose that in dealing with this difficult and complex question—the most complex, perhaps, that he ever recollected—he could have brought to the discharge of that duty anything approaching to the ability which had been displayed by the right hon. Gentleman, and to which he would wish to add his tribute of admiration; and, secondly, if he had been, the operation would have been too much in the nature of what is known as "The Happy Despatch" to be pleasing to him, and he should have felt compunction in putting possibly an extinguisher upon too many of the class with which he was associated himself—namely, the country gentlemen of England. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had expressed a hope that the country gentlemen would come forward in the future and be largely represented on the Councils. He shared the hope of his right hon. Friend to the full. He considered that it would be the greatest possible misfortune to the country if the services of those gentlemen were to be lost to the counties in the future. It would be more wise, however, not to legislate too much on that assumption, although he could not help thinking that there had been too great a tendency shown in that direction throughout the course of the speeches delivered. He had never doubted that the country gentlemen would be perfectly ready to come forward and give their services to the cause of county government in the future as they had done in the past. But whether they would be largely and permanently represented on those Councils depended, in his opinion, very greatly on two things. Would those new electoral divisions be keenly and habitually contested in future, and would a constant canvass be requisite to maintain a seat? If so, he was bound to say that it was probable, while many a country gentleman would be found to shrink from no amount of labour in the performance of his duty, he might not care to undergo the intolerable annoyance of a contested election every three years, with something in the nature of a continual canvass during the period intervening between each election. Now, judging from what they knew of municipal elections up to the present time, he thought it was exceedingly probable that a very large amount of political spirit would be infused into all those contests and elections; and if that was so, then he repeated that he thought it would be most unwise on their part if they were to legislate largely on the assumption that a great number of magistrates and country gentlemen would be returned, as a matter of course, to those County Councils. That question, to his mind, became more important still when they considered how the newly-elected Councillors were to be apportioned between the county divisions and the boroughs; and that was the first point of detail to which he was anxious to call the attention of the Government. If he understood the Bill aright, what was going to happen was this—first of all, the Local Government Board was to settle the number of Councillors for each county. He should be glad to have some more information on that point from his right hon. Friend. He did not know whether it was possible to give it at present; but, if possible, it would be very desirable. In the second place, it was to apportion them between the boroughs that had sufficient population to return one Councillor and the rest of the county; and the divisions were to be, as nearly as possible, equal in population. Under those circumstances, it appeared to him that it might well happen that in counties where the boroughs were both numerous and populous, as, for instance, in Staffordshire, Lancashire, and parts of Yorskshire, it might be perfectly possible that what he called the county business proper might be absolutely dominated and governed by a large majority on the Council of the representatives of the towns. He did not think that would be either desirable or right; and if that was really going to happen it would, in his opinion, be a great objection to the Bill. On the other hand, he should be told there was the danger of the counties losing the large contributions to be obtained from the towns. For himself, however, he should prefer to see county business managed and controlled by those who were principally concerned, even at the risk of losing some of the contributions to which he had alluded. That was a somewhat serious difficulty in connection with the constitution of those new Councils, and he hoped that the Government would afford them some further information on that point. He now came to the functions to be committed to the new Councils; and, first, as to the police, he was bound to say that the opinion he had formed was not weakened by what had fallen from the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) in the course of that debate, more particularly in reference to Ireland. In the matter of the police he agreed entirely in what fell the other night from his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). He wished to see the police entirely remaining under the control of the Quarter Sessions as at present. He saw no object in the proposed change, and he greatly doubted whether dual control would prove a business-like arrangement or one that would work satisfactorily in the future. Indeed, it was not a dual but a treble control that was proposed. In the first place, the appointment and control of the Chief Constable—perhaps the most important thing of all—was to be left entirely to the Quarter Sessions. In the second place, the County Council, as well as the Quarter Sessions, were to be entrusted with powers which at present were vested in the Quarter Sessions. The powers to which he was referring would enable the Quarter Sessions at present to direct constables to perform any duty they liked, in addition to their ordinary duties under the Act of 1856, called the County and Borough Police Act. And, thirdly, the Joint Committee were to exercise and discharge all the remaining duties, powers, and responsibilities at present vested in the Quarter Sessions. There they had three separate and distinct authorities at once having more or less control over the police; and, on the face of it, he asked the House, as men of business, whether that was likely to prove a very business-like or practical arrangement? How were those objections met the other night by the Secretary of the Local Government Board (Mr. Long), speaking on behalf of the Government? His hon. Friend said he hoped to be elected a member of a County Council, and if he was elected he should greatly resent being called upon to meet demands from the magistrates to pay certain sums of money for a certain object over which he had no control whatever. That was his answer to the objections of his hon. and gallant Friend as to the police. Of all men in the world, probably the Secretary of the Local Government Board was the one most likely and even certain to be elected for any County Council, because he possessed many charming and amiable qualities, and was blessed with youth, health, energy, courage, and great ability, combined, moreover, with a very well deserved popularity both in private and public life. His hon. Friend's return, therefore, for any division of his county might be taken as a foregone conclusion; and if all his brother magistrates were like himself, he would be ready to-morrow to transfer all the power over the police from the Quarter Sessions to the County Council. But his hon. Friend was hardly consistent in saying he would resent a demand for some object over which he had no control. If that argument was good for anything, it was good for more than his hon. Friend intended, because, under the Bill as it stood, for the Chief Constable, over whom the Quarter Sessions were to remain the sole and supreme authority, the County Council would be called upon to pay without having any control over him or his appointment. For himself, he thought the police ought to be managed and controlled by one authority; and, inasmuch as the present managers were the people responsible for peace and order and the maintenance of law throughout the country, that authority ought to be the Quarter Sessions. Almost any single control, however, that, for instance, of the Home Office, which had been mentioned, would be preferable, in his opinion, to the plan provided in the Bill. He came next to the transfer of departmental power contemplated by Clause 8 of the Bill. He frankly confessed that he did not at present know exactly what those departmental powers included. It was all done by reference to a great number of Acts of Parliament, which he owned he had not yet had time to master. There were four Acts relating to the transfer of powers from the Secretary of State; seven Acts relating to the transfer of powers from the Board of Trade; and 12 Acts relating to the transfer of powers from the Local Government Board. There were 23 different Acts altogether relating to the transfer of powers to the new County Council. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board said very little indeed on that subject at the introduction of the Bill, and his hon. Friend the Secretary of that Board the other night, as far as he remembered, said nothing. But before the debate closed he hoped that the House would receive some further information on that point. It seemed to him that there was no necessity whatever for any hurry in transferring or giving to the County Councils any such large additional powers as those contemplated by the clause. For example, one of the Acts of Parliament referred to was an Act as to making orders for the creation of harbours and piers. He did not see the object of giving to the Council of a purely inland county, say such as Rutland, the power to make an order either for a harbour or a pier. That appeared to him to be totally unnecessary. What they wanted to do more than anything was to perfect the machinery and the constitution of the new Authorities, leaving those powers to be transferred to them hereafter when they were found to be actually necessary, wherever they found a County Council to be working well and to be worthy of being entrusted with those powers which it was proposed to give them all at once. Moreover, such a postponement of the bestowal of those powers as he suggested might probably do something to lighten the Bill and facilitate its passing, as he hoped it would, this Session. He would now say a few words on the question of finance. He could not think that the very large borrowing powers given by Clause 62 were either necessary or right. The counties were already, he believed, adequately supplied with bridges, lunatic asylums, police stations, and various other buildings of this kind, and it seemed hardly possible to imagine that there could be any reasonable objects for the purposes of which it would be necessary to borrow to so great an extent as two years' rateable value of the county. He should like to see the borrowing powers very largely reduced, and he would certainly advise that the two years' rateable value should be reduced to one year, and that the period for repayment of the loans should be brought down from 60 years to 30 years. That, he hoped, was the least that would be done. He should like the Government to give the House some information as to the amount of relief which the counties were to receive with regard to land. He was greatly afraid, when all was said and done, it would be found that land would get very much less relief than was commonly expected. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) pointed out the other day that five counties, of which Lincolnshire was one, would receive not more than £89,000 altogether.

Mr. RITCHIE: I do not think he said that. The reference was made to one particular branch of the distribution—the Probate Duties.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, that the right hon. Gentleman's explanation relieved his mind very considerably; and he hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman was able to deal more fully with the subject he would show that a real measure of relief was to be given to land. With regard to the Registration Bill, he was informed that at a meeting of Clerks of the Peace held in London on Friday last it was decided that the Bill in its present form could not be worked without immense trouble and expense, and it was suggested that instead of the list proposed in the Bill, the Parliamentary Register should be taken with the addition of a list to include the ladies who were entitled to vote. If all that was said at the meeting was true, the matter was one which required careful consideration. He hoped that the questions to which he had referred would be thought deserving of the attention of the Government, and that his observations would not be looked upon as hostile criticism of the Local Government measure, which he regarded as a genuine and honest attempt on the part of a Conservative Government to carry out to the letter the pledges which they had frequently given to the constituencies and the country.

Mr. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) said, he thought it would be agreed that Members on that side of the House had offered no vexatious opposition to this Bill, and he trusted that the same treatment would be extended to any legislation with which it might be the fate of the Liberal Party hereafter to promote. With regard to what had been said as to the action of the Liberal Party at certain meetings which had been held, he had only to say that if there was any vexation at a Conservative and not a Liberal Government having introduced this Bill, he did not share that feeling. Nor did he join in any feeling that because the Bill did not give them all that they wanted they would have none of it. The Reform Bill of 1867 contained a great principle, overlaid with fancy devices of all kinds; but the Liberal Party cleared those devices away, and it would be the duty of that Party now to see that all the enfeebling clauses of the present measure were removed. He admitted that the position of affairs was at the time he referred to very different, because the Tory Party, which was then weak, was now strong; but for his own part, he would give the Government credit for the same honesty of purpose as hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House would claim for themselves; still he thought they must all remember that the natural leaning of the Conservative Party was not more in a democratic direction. The late Lord Beaconsfield directed the attention of the Tory Party to the necessity of democratic legislation. It might, perhaps, remain for the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) to educate them to like it; but it was the duty of the Liberal Party, at any rate, to separate the principles of the Bill from those matters which encumbered them. A great measure of reform such as this should contain three principles. Two of those principles—decentralization and election by simple franchise—were recognized in the Bill. The third was the principle of consolidation, which must follow as a natural result, as a matter of course, on the legislation on which they were now engaged. He felt that the value of the Bill had been greatly diminished by the exclusion from its provisions of the Poor Law system. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) might have thought that a formidable provision to introduce, and, no doubt, he was unwilling to overload his Bill; but he (Mr. Paulton) could not help thinking, if the Government were strongly pressed, they might not be unwilling to consider the matter, and he felt that if they could be induced to do so the right hon. Gentleman would find no difficulty in providing for this great reform. The omission of the Poor Law system was, in his opinion, sure to weaken one of the powers of the County Councils. He would point out that, just when the new County Councils had got into working order, there would be a great disorganization by the introduction of the principle in question, which might now be introduced, and by which all the confusion which must otherwise ensue would be avoided. He regretted that one of the Members for Suffolk had seen fit to complicate his Amendment by introducing the question of the parish. The Government could not accept that Amendment, because it would strike at the framework of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) had said that the Government had begun at the wrong end. If that were so, he could not understand how hon. Members on that side of the House could possibly vote for the Bill in any shape or form. If the measure were bad *ab initio* they ought to oppose it; but for his part he did not hold that opinion, and he considered the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board was quite right when he said, in commenting on it, that he had not been able to arrive at any clear idea of what hon. Gentlemen wished to be done. If the parish were adopted as the unit of area, it would be inevitable, in many cases, that the squire and the parson would be able to regulate matters exactly as they liked. The Ballot was a very small protection, and, moreover, he thought it would be most difficult to galvanize into life the parish and vestry, which was now in a moribund condition. A parish had been defined as a place which possessed a police-constable; but it was replied that one could not be sure of this, because the policeman could never be found. He thought that great difficulty would arise from local jealousy and inharmonious co-operation in a district of so small an area as a parish, and there would also be considerable difficulty in many cases of finding competent men to do the important work which would attach to the new authorities. It was important that the agricultural labourers should have full and free representation, and that was one reason why he was strongly opposed to what were called selected Councillors. He could not see any kind of advantage in them. He did not see what purpose they would serve, except of insuring the over-representation of the majority on the Boards. They had very small proof that the country gentlemen were going to abjure the County Councils, or shrink from the work which naturally fell upon them; and, that being so, there was no need for these selected Councillors. The right men would come forward—men who were competent, and whom it was most desirable to elect to serve on the County Councils. If they were fit men they would be elected, and, if not, they ought to be rejected. Therefore, he failed to see why they should encumber the great principle laid down with regard to the election of the Council with this old machinery. It was well known that on Local Boards the elected members were regarded by the *ex officio* members with suspicion, and in many cases they had ceased to attend. He thought the same thing would happen in the case of County Councils. With regard to the question of licensing, he did not wish to go into details, but simply to say that the parts of the Bill to which he strongly objected were the Licensing Clauses; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman with what object the Government had touched this question at all? Was it to enable the people to diminish the number of public-houses? If not, then he failed to see why they should trouble to interfere with the present system in any way; if that was the object, he did not think that the Bill would assist in diminishing the number of public-houses; on the contrary, he thought it placed a great hindrance in the way of those sober localities where there was a desire to lessen the facilities for drinking. He thought that the constitution of licensing committees would add very considerable complication to a system already complicated, and he suggested as a compromise that their powers should instead be placed in the hands of the District Councils. That plan would, to a great extent, obviate the objection which he had to the clauses in their present form. The District Councils would have plenty of time to do the work, and they would, at the same time, represent more correctly than the proposed committees the views of the rural classes. In spite of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) he could not see either the justice or necessity for compensation. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had to-day stated, in answer to a Question, that one-seventh of the Licence Duty would be remitted to publicans who closed their houses on Sunday. If that principle were good as applied to Sunday Closing, why should it not be applied to the rest of the week? If it were proposed to give the publican the value of his licence fee, he should have no objection to that being done; but he did object very strongly to the clause which provided compensation; and he thought it would be found that there was in the country an exceedingly strong feeling against it. With regard to the financial question, he regretted that the Government had not seen fit to divide the rates between the owner and occupier, and he thought it would be much more difficult to do this in the future than now. He regarded the emigration proposals in the Bill as exceedingly valuable. He had never believed much in agencies in London and elsewhere for the purpose of facilitating emigration, because they were not able to get hold of the right people to send abroad; but the District Council would be able to do this, and he thought that in the manner proposed a great deal of good would be done. He believed, notwithstanding the argument of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney), that the judicious selection of persons fitted for emigration would sooner or later assist those who remained, and that it would not in any way increase the misery which had induced certain members of their families to seek their fortunes in another land. With regard to the hon. Gentleman's remarks on the grant in respect of paupers under this Bill, it seemed to him that he had somewhat confused indoor and outdoor relief; he appeared to think that the Guardians would be very anxious to increase the number of indoor paupers. If that were so, which he did not believe, it was not quite as easy as the hon. Gentleman imagined to induce people to go into the workhouse, even if it were desirable to do so. He thought that this provision would merely enforce the workhouse test, which, in his opinion, was the best test of pauperism. He could not see that the State had any real duty in the matter beyond preserving the poor from starvation. That was the principle of the Poor Law, and he thought that this grant to workhouses would only make the workhouse test more stringent, and do nothing in the way of producing competition amongst Boards of Guardians to secure indoor paupers. Speaking on behalf of his own constituency, he expressed his great regret that the Government had not seen their way to impose a tax upon royalties, which acted so much to the prejudice of the people there in the matter of wages. These royalties amounted to something like £6,000,000 sterling a-year, and upon them the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might easily have raised an annual revenue of £300,000 without injuring anyone. He pointed out that in South Africa the Government was receiving a revenue of £600,000 a-year from mining licences; and, seeing that £150,000 was received from royalties by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners alone in the county of Durham, he thought that the people were thoroughly justified in feeling very sore that nothing had been done in this direction. Finally, in spite of the objections to, and the omissions from, the Bill, he thought that the Liberal Party would do wisely in accepting it, not as a complete measure, but as a very valuable instalment, of local government reform.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) said, he did not desire to enter at length into the many complicated questions that would arise under this Bill, some of which had been considered that evening, but should confine his remarks to one part of the measure—namely, that which contained the Licensing Clauses. But before proceeding, he might be allowed to congratulate the Government and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) upon the very favourable reception which the Bill had met with, the main reason of which he thought was the boldness and breadth of the lines upon which the Bill was drawn. He was glad to find that the elective system was the main principle and basis of the measure, and also that the Government had resisted the temptation, if it were one, to introduce other elements such as *ex officio* or nominated members of Council. He had, however, considerable doubt as to the wisdom of introducing selected Councillors. He did not think that one could give a definite opinion against that system, as they had had experience of it in the boroughs, and he was bound to say that as far as his knowledge went no great evil had resulted from the appointment of aldermen in boroughs. At the same time, no one could doubt that very great danger lurked in the principle of selection of councillors and aldermen. It had been pointed out that evening, and he wished to emphasize it, that it was exceedingly possible and even probable that in many cases the majority of an elected Council on a Town or County Council might use their power to intensify that majority, and make it overwhelming, when it did not fairly represent the opinions of the electors. Still he thought they might adopt the proposal in the Bill, because the main argument for or against the system would apply both in boroughs and in counties, and he was disposed to agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) that they might wait, and if at a later period it should be thought desirable to make a change, they would be in a better position to make it in counties and boroughs at the same time. With respect to the Licensing Clauses, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had been charged with not being honest in his desire to see some settlement of the question. If any such opinion was really held he thought it was entirely unjustifiable. He believed this was an honest attempt, perhaps not in the best form—he did not think it was—to put the Licensing Question on a better footing than it had hitherto been. But while he thought it was an honest attempt on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, he did not think it was a sufficiently bold one. No doubt the elective system was contained in these clauses—no doubt popular local control was found in them—but he thought the system adopted only confused the issues, and did not make popular control as efficient or as strong as it ought to be. The right hon. Gentleman, in introducing this measure, said—

> "It may be asked whether we do not propose some means whereby the locality shall have some voice in the decision of such an important question as that of licensing. We propose a new means by which local interests will have full force."

He (Sir William Houldsworth) thought that those interests had not full force in the measure now proposed. There were two separate issues placed before the electors. In the first place, the elector would have to consider the bearing of his vote upon the composition of the County Council; he would also have to consider the effect of his vote with regard to the Licensing Law and the licensing policy to be adopted. Now he ventured to think that those two issues ought to be kept separate and distinct, if they were to have the full expression of popular opinion. It was idle to suppose that they would be able to keep the Licensing Question out of the elections for the County Councils; it would not only creep in, but, in the majority of cases, it would be a dominant consideration, because they had to consider that although the electors would probably take some interest in the man they elected for the County Council, still that interest would be of a general character, and the electors would not be able to go into the particulars of county administration and decide for themselves as to whether this or that particular course was the one which it was best to adopt. But on the Licensing Question they would have a very definite opinion of their own either on one side or the other. That question would come home to them in a very personal form; it was a question in which they took the greatest interest, and on which they felt themselves capable of giving an opinion, both with regard to the question itself, and also with regard to the candidates. They would, therefore, wish to make known their opinions on this subject, and to elect the Councillor who would best represent and share those opinions. With regard to the election of the County Council, he presumed that the ordinary course would be to choose a man of position, a popular man, one who had experience in the administration of affairs, and one in whom general confidence was reposed. But when they came to choose a member to act for them on the Licensing Committee they would feel that they must go very much further, and they would not be content to choose a man of merely good business capacity, but a man who held their own views on a question in which they took so deep an interest. He ventured to urge this upon the Government from the point of view of the candidates. It was said that the country gentleman should form part of the Council, and with that they all agreed; but if they admitted the burning question of licensing into elections for the County Councils, what with the temperance people on one side and the publicans and their friends on the other, they would frighten country gentlemen, and deter men of position from allowing themselves to be nominated for election on these Councils. That view had been urged by the hon. and learned Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton) in connection with the Sunday Closing Clause, and he believed it applied to the whole Licensing Question. He was of opinion that unless they separated the Licensing Committee from the County Council they would endanger to a great extent the success of the County Council, because the voters would be in this position—they would either have to sacrifice the best County Councillor and put an inferior man in his place, or they would have to vote for the man they considered the best candidate for the County Council, though feeling at the same time that he did not fairly represent their views on the licensing Question. He would, therefore, urge upon the Government to consider whether they could not altogether eliminate from the election of County Councils the question of licensing. Now that proposal was not a very strange or novel one. It was actually in operation at the present moment, and when the Bill was passed it would be so still with regard to Boards of Guardians. In that case it might be said to be only temporary, but the principle was also in force in school board elections, and he thought the history of the school board controversy was a justification of the proposal he ventured to make. The House would remember that when the Education Bill was introduced, it was proposed that the matter should be placed in the hands of Town Councils, and, in the case of counties, in the hands of the Vestry; but the opposition was so great that it was ultimately agreed there should be separate elections for school boards. No one who remembered how burning a question this was could avoid the conclusion that it would be wise to eliminate the question of licensing from County Council elections. There would not be any difficulty in electing Licensing Committees separately, and enabling them to represent popular opinion on this question. He had endeavoured to follow the Bill as it stood at present, and he saw no difficulty in arranging that the Licensing Committee should be elected contemporaneously with the County Council; it would be nothing more than what the Bill provided should take place in the case of the election of Borough Councils, which was to be contemporaneous with that of County Councils, and therefore he thought there was no possible difficulty in the way of his suggestion. He was also following the Bill closely when he said that if these Committees were elected independently of the County Councils, their decisions should nevertheless be subject to the confirmation of the County Councils. What he thought would be gained by the introduction of this principle of separate election in the case of Licensing Committees was that, in the first place, popular feeling would be satisfied on a great question in a manner which he did not think it would be satisfied under the existing proposal. They would then have popular opinion expressed—roughly perhaps, but explicitly—on this particular question; they would understand the direction in which a particular district wished to go, and they would have all the various questions likely to come before the Licensing Committee discussed by men elected for that special purpose. As he had pointed out, the County Councils would have full power of declining to confirm the decision arrived at by the Committee, and thus there would be a protection and safeguard against extreme legislation on one side or the other, while, at the same time, they would secure the great advantage of eliminating from the County Councils an element which would be one of danger and difficulty in those elections. He hoped the Government would fairly consider this proposal, which he believed offered the only means by which they could give full force to public opinion. He, for one, would be sorry to embrace the doctrine of Local Option, which had many grave defects. At the same time, he thought that the temperance question ought to be settled by the people of the country, and that it should be submitted to an authority which was elected to deal with it. With regard to the question of compensation, he had no hesitation in saying that he felt very strongly there must be compensation. He did not think for one moment that the country would tolerate any measure so utterly unjust to the trade as would put it in the power of any authority to withdraw a publican's licence without giving compensation. At the same time, they must remember that it was very doubtful whether there was any legal claim on the part of the publicans. He himself believed they had no vested interest. He had before him the decisions of three or four eminent Judges on this subject. The late Chief Justice Cockburn, in 1878, said that the Justices had the same discretion to refuse the renewal of a licence as they had in granting a new licence. Mr. Justice Stephen said that they did not renew a licence, but granted a new licence. Mr. Justice Field said that the Legislature recognized no right at all in holding a licence; it did not treat it as a question of vested interest in any way; and, finally, Mr. Baron Pollock said that the notion that there was property in a licence was, in his opinion, unsound in law. He (Sir William Houldsworth) would not venture to decide the question, but thought it proper to point out that there was at least doubt in this matter. But, whether there was a vested interest or not, there was certainly an equitable claim for compensation. Of course, there was the important consideration whether that equitable claim which he ventured to put forward was, or ought to be, considered perpetual and indefinite. He felt, although there was an equitable claim, that it mainly arose from the sudden loss or damage which might be sustained in consequence of the licence being withdrawn. He considered that this claim would be fairly satisfied if a period of seven or 10 years were fixed during which it might exist, either in a diminishing or in its original form, but that at the end of some period it ought absolutely to cease. This was an important matter, inasmuch as new licences were to be granted without compensation; there would then be two sets of licences, one carrying compensation to a very large amount, and others not carrying any compensation at all. In his opinion, if any favour were shown, compensation ought to be given to the men who had had short licences rather than to those who had held them for a longer term. The Government, in dealing with the Licensing Question, ought to do justice to the parties concerned. But, on the other hand, there was no doubt that, considering the miseries which had arisen from neglect, bad legislation, and worse administration in the past, they ought to encourage any movement towards temperance on the part of the people of this country. There was a very great movement in this direction, not solely amongst temperance enthusiasts, but among the working classes in the large communities; and, after all, it was they, and not the enthusiasts, who felt the miseries, the sorrows, the troubles, and the dangers to which excessive drinking led. He believed there would be no more popular measure among the working classes as a whole than one which, while it did justice to the trade, at the same time encouraged, the temperance which was growing up amongst us, by removing the excessive temptations to drink placed before the people of the country. Finally, he would urge upon the Government to take a large view of this question. They had a great opportunity of solving it at the present moment; all parties desired some settlement, and there were many in the country coming forward and urging on the movement towards temperance, who had never played such a part in our previous history. There were, no doubt, difficulties in the way, but they were not insurmountable. He trusted the Government would not think of abandoning the Licensing Clauses without a struggle, either under stress of the opposition they might meet with, or by becoming disheartened by the difficulties surrounding the question. Those clauses, he believed, afforded a good foundation upon which a good superstructure might be raised; and if the Government succeeded in dealing with this question on the lines of their own Bill—with such modifications as might be suggested—he believed these clauses would not be the least valuable part of the great measure which had been proposed.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, no one could turn over the pages of this Bill without finding upon it every mark of very great care, and every mark of an endeavour to deal broadly with an extremely difficult and complicated subject. Perhaps those hon. Members who had had some experience of local government could best appreciate the difficulties which arose on so many points when they considered the interwoven and complicated nature of the subject. He wished to give the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) great credit for the pains they had taken to lay before the House a Bill which could be so readily accepted in principle by the House, but on which there would arise in the course of discussion in Committee innumerable points which would require the gravest attention of the House. Now, he (Sir Joseph Pease) asked himself, in looking at the Bill, what were the objects in regard to local government which they most desired to carry out? What did they desire to effect? They required a methodical system of local government—a more systematic policy than they at present possessed. They wanted it to be as simple as possible as regarded its construction and as regarded its arrangement; they wanted direct representation of those who paid the expenses of local government; they asked for economy in administration; they asked for division of local burdens between owners and occupiers; they asked for one standard of value for local and Imperial purposes, and they asked that there should be, if possible, one means of collecting the poor rate and other charges, Imperial and local, which it was necessary to levy in the various parishes; but, above all, they wanted to destroy the multiplicity of Local Authorities and the multiplicity of elections, and that which troubled all ratepayers—namely, the consequent high expenditure on officials. For these propositions it was necessary to secure larger areas, and to secure superior persons for their management and superior officials to carry out the instructions of those vested with authority. Looking at the Bill, he must say that those who drafted and organized it in a great many instances came up to the standard which he had thus endeavoured to sketch and lay down. But he was not one of those who said—"Take this Bill as an instalment." He did not think much of instalments in measures of this character. He believed that if they were only to take this Bill as an instalment, they would be sowing for themselves the seeds of a crop which would constantly keep them at work and produce unsettlement in the country. What he desired to do in the few short sentences he was about to utter, and in which he was about to criticize the Bill—he hoped in a friendly criticism, and by no means hostile to Her Majesty's Government—he hoped to put before the House the desirability of passing the measure, not as an instalment, but as, so far as it went, a complete scheme, which would give satisfaction to the country and bring credit to the Government and the House. He might say of the District Councils he thought that they did come very much up to the standard which he had laid down. They would absorb a large number of Local Boards, and he should be very glad indeed that that absorption should take place. These District Councils, which he hoped would be of sufficient size and quality to manage local affairs, would do away with a number of local elections and existing Local Boards. But, unfortunately, the Bill left them rather at sea as to the size of the districts and the number of representatives that each local District Council ought to have on it. Information upon this point had not been supplied to the House and the country by the Local Government Department. The complaint which he heard in the country was that although these local District Councils were to absorb Local Boards in so many districts, they had another new authority in the new County Councils laid alongside, as it were, of the Quarter Sessions; and that County Council would be, no doubt, an expensive Council. They could not hide from themselves that it would be so. He did not suppose they desired to hide the fact from themselves. There would necessarily be very expensive elections, because if there was any ambition left in the English country people, it would be to become members of these Boards—there would be still more expensive registration. There would be a desire to keep the corrupt element out, but there would be the expenses of the candidates coming forward every three years, and he was very much afraid that unless they could arrive at some economical method of proceeding in this direction the District and County Councils would prove very expensive, and the elections and registration would eat very much into the money that the districts and county hoped to receive from the Government in the proposed alteration of the system of Imperial and local taxation. He should like to see Boards of Guardians absorbed very rapidly, if not at once, into the local District Councils. The Board of Guardians was of course one of the largest money spending Departments of the country, and he could not help thinking that a very little further ingenuity on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board could devise means by which the local District Councils could very speedily absorb all the duties now performed by Boards of Guardians in the different counties. If he might suggest a plan, it would be that the District Councils should appoint representatives according to their rateable values in the Unions of which they formed a part to take the place of the Board of Guardians until a better arrangement could be devised. He thought then that these representatives might issue the precepts now issued by the Boards of Guardians over the same areas. Boards of Guardians might be thus absorbed into the District Councils without any great or immediate change except in those who had to administer it being elected on the District Council instead of on the Board of Guardians. In this way one election—and a very important election—would be done away with, and a very great economy would in that way be brought about. The question of the school board, he owned, was a much more delicate and complicated one. The school boards had, under the present system, been a great success; but he could not help feeling—having watched pretty attentively the action of the school boards, and having seen one party uppermost and then another—that there was very little difference in the practical administration of the Boards, whether they were in the hands of the Church Party or the Dissenters, the Radicals or the Conservatives. The Act regulated equally all who had the management of the Boards, and he hoped the day was fast coming when that curious kind of election which was neither one thing nor the other, which now characterized the election to the school board, would be done away with by general consent, and the duties of the Boards would be taken up by the District Councils, and in this way save the necessity for another election. It seemed to him that Her Majesty's Government had fallen away a good deal from the high principle which was laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board when he introduced his Bill. They had fallen away, he thought, on a very important point from the very sound doctrine which the right hon. Gentleman had laid down of direct representation—of the District Councils and County Councils, both being subjects of direct representation. He, for one, could not see any advantage whatever in what were called "selected" Councillors. They came, he thought, very spuriously across the sound doctrine of direct representation. The hon. Baronet the Member for North-West Manchester (Sir William Houldsworth) thought the action of aldermen in boroughs, looking at it as a whole, had been very good; but he (Sir Joseph Pease) did not think aldermen on the County Councils would be of any service—there were different opinions upon the matter as regards boroughs, and perhaps it was difficult to express an opinion worth having on so complicated a subject; but he would remind the House that aldermen in boroughs at the present time were almost wholly elected, not from the outside, as the Government proposed the County Select Councillors should be elected, but from amongst those who had served as Councillors and selected Councillors. He thought the same remark would, in the end, apply in regard to County Councils. They would only damage their Councils by these co-optative governors. Another reason why he thought that this would do damage was this. Men who thought, and perhaps rightly, that they were popular in their counties, and thoroughly fit to serve on Councils, might stand aside and say—"If I do not go to the trouble and expense of an election, I shall be elected by my neighbours without the trouble;" and probably these were the very men who ought to have stood for election, and who whilst waiting to be elected in this way would be left out in the cold. He must ask Her Majesty's Government to look over these Select Councilmen Clauses. He believed they would operate unfavourably to the proper action of the Councillors and very much impair the Bill. Was it to be supposed, for instance, that these selected Councillors, through the method of their selection, would be wiser and better men than the elected Councillors? It seemed to him that the co-optative plan, whilst in some cases it might have its advantages, would in this instance be attended by several serious disadvantages when they came to the formation of these Boards. There was another clause which he trusted would be remedied. Whenever there was a vacancy in an elected Council that was to be filled co-optatively. He thought that whenever there was a vacancy the district would naturally desire to elect its member rather than to allow the District or County Council to fill up the vacancy from amongst its own members. Now, it had been said that county gentlemen would do their duty in regard to this Bill—that had been said over and over again. He believed they would do their duty; and he trusted his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board, who offered himself to go on one of the Boards, would, if not employed here in the House of Commons, be readily chosen as a member of one of the Boards. He had heard of a very distinguished nobleman having offered to take the Chairmanship of one of the Boards, and he (Sir Joseph Pease) trusted that he might do so, and that it would be a matter of ambition amongst gentlemen who had hitherto been identified with Quarter Sessions to become members of these new Bodies. They knew what enormous powers the new Boards would have entrusted to them. The Quarter Sessions had enjoyed extensive powers, and no one had ever accused those who had been associated with Quarter Sessions of acting in anything but a businesslike manner. County gentlemen were going to do their duty; and they must also face the fact that the glory of Quarter Sessions passed away with this Bill. There would be little left to Quarter Sessions but the trial of a few prisoners; the question of the police, if left with them; the trial of rating, bastardy, and other appeals. The gentlemen who took the position of Chairmen of these new Councils would not only have almost the entire business now entrusted to the Chairmen of the Magistrates at Quarter Sessions to perform, but would also have to discharge those still more important duties which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had described in his speech. He, with his counsel, would have to take upon himself the issue of the Provisional Orders now issued by the Board of Trade and other Departments. He would also have to take charge of the indoor poor provisions and of emigration, and he would also have the very important and distinguished power as Chairman of his Board of lending money for local purposes to other localities. He would ask hon. Gentlemen opposite, therefore, who would be the greater man, the Chairman of the County Council or the Chairman of the Quarter Sessions? Certainly, the Chairman of the County Council would be the greater man, and he (Sir Joseph Pease) trusted that the person selected would be the leading man in the county. Many of those gentlemen who had filled the post of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions would naturally come to be Chairman of these County Councils. That being the case, if the new duties to be discharged were greater and more responsible, surely the best of the magistracy and the best of the county gentlemen would flock to the standard which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had raised. He believed that they would prove effective representatives, and that they would secure the confidence of their neighbours and of the electors. When they came to look at the question of police, his (Sir Joseph Pease's) views went very much with the views which had been enunciated on both sides of the House, that the duties would have to fall on that body in the county which, having been elected, had the confidence of the people, and which comprised the best men of the county. But it was said that the Chairmen of these Bodies should have the qualification of Justices of the Peace. They all knew that the county qualification was not a very heavy or a very great one; but he thought that if a man was elected in the first place for one of these districts, and was elected to the County Council, and then was taken by his peers on that Council to be Chairman, they could have no better qualification, and he trusted when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board came to the clause bearing upon this matter he would not insist upon the Chairman of the County Council going through the form of proving the qualification of so much rental or so much property. The eldest son of the knight of the shire was already qualified to be a Justice of the Peace, therefore he hoped the provision as to qualification in the Bill would not be insisted upon. It would add to the difficulty of obtaining a good Chairman, and could not possibly be of any service in promoting the objects of the measure. With regard to the police arrangements, he thought there had almost been a consensus of opinion on both sides of the House on one or two points. There were some hon. Gentlemen who had urged, and strongly urged, that it would be a good plan to place the whole police of the country in the hands of the Home Office. From that view he entirely dissented, but he did assent to the view that a divided authority would never work, and that if the magistrates were to supply the Chief Constable of the County there were sure to be dissensions arising between them and the County Council, because the County Council would have had no hearing in the appointment of the Chief Constable. The County Council, if anything went wrong, would naturally say,—"No wonder we are in this plight; you appointed the Chief Constable, and we had nothing to do with it." He very much agreed with the view that the Chief Constable would have to be appointed by the body that had charge of the police, and in his opinion the body that ought to have charge of the police was the body that had the sanction of the ratepayers, and which had within its ranks, as he had already endeavoured to prove, the leading spirits and the best informed men, and the most able men of the county. Now, having got over this police argument, he should like to say a word or two with regard to some remarks which had fallen from his noble Friend the Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire (Viscount Lymington). The noble Viscount said—

> "Surely it is better that the magistrates should have this under their charge, because there might be cases of popular riot in connection with which public feeling was excited, where there would be difficulty placed in the way of the Chief Constable in obtaining his expenses, or carrying out his views in the matter of putting down these *émeutes* with the police force under his charge."

He (Sir Joseph Pease) thought his noble Friend had not had much experience in borough local matters. He himself had seen a good deal of them, and he could safely say that he had never known an instance in which the Watch Committee in a borough, however radical the members might have been, had refused to put the police at the service of the Chief Constable when requested; in fact, he might say that the more radical the man was the more he was in favour of establishing that authority which the Watch Committee had conferred upon him. The noble Viscount had said that by the power which would be placed in the hands of the Watch Committees policemen might be sent out for the collection of the taxes which the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to place at the disposal of the Local Councils; but if the noble Viscount believed that the county gentlemen would act on these Councils, it would be necessary for him to have faith in the doctrine that such proceedings would receive the assent of such gentlemen as now formed the Quarter Sessions. They would take part in the Watch Committees, and he (Sir Joseph Pease) must say that in his observations of borough life he had never known a policeman employed on a duty which had not appertained to his rightful calling, and the duties which he was enrolled to perform. These fears were utterly groundless, and they had been shown to be utterly groundless by the experience of those boroughs which had a police force of their own. There might be cases—and those cases the Government had dealt with by taking their police away from them—where the boroughs were so small that it would be absurd to give them a police of their own. Some of the larger boroughs were very proud, and justly proud, of their police force and their Chief Constable, and the way they had done their duties. He thought if the police were handed over bodily to the County Councils, the county would be just as safe and public order would be better promoted than it would be by leaving the police in the hands of the few magistrates who would still adhere to what he might call the glories of the past in the Court of Quarter Sessions. There was another reason why he should wish to leave the police in the hands of the Local Councils. The greater the responsibility they could impose upon the Councils the more would the best men of the counties try to be members of those Councils; and if there were no other reason than that, he should ask Her Majesty's Government to reconsider this proposal, and to leave the police in the hands of the Councils, which ought to be made as responsible as possible. There was another point upon which he should like to say something, and that was the question of the election for three years. It was proposed that Councils should be elected every three years, and he must confess that, though it might not be a very radical view, he thought that was a very short time. He believed they would get a better class of men on their Councils if the elections were for four or five years. Frequent elections were a great trouble in the county, and were a great expense, and would, he thought, too often prevent the best men coming forward, either because they wished to save their purses or did not like the trouble of standing for an election every three years. If they took away co-optative members from those Councils, he thought they would have a general consensus of opinion that a longer term of office than that at present proposed would be an advantage to the Councils. There were one or two other points, also, to which he should like to refer. For instance, he saw in the Bill no Chiltern Hundreds—no means for retirement. It seemed to him that they did require some plan by which any person who, either from ill-health or feeling an inclination to retire, should have the opportunity of doing so, and that the vacancy so caused should be filled up by another election. Then as to the question of the division of rates. He was in hopes when the Bill was brought forward that the old and very excellent idea promulgated in this House a number of years ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) of the division of rates between owners and occupiers would be enforced in this Bill. He believed that was very desirable. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), when speaking the other night, laid great stress on this, and he would give him credit for having studied very efficiently the question of local government. He argued with force that if the rates were once to be divided the owners of property would look far more assiduously after the expenditure of the occupiers than they did at present. The hon. Member laid great stress on that, because he had come to the conclusion, after long investigation, that a great deal of what they called extravagant expenditure was occupier's expenditure, which ultimately fell upon the owners, but which the owners did not look after, because it did not touch them in the pocket at the time that it occurred. He did not ask Her Majesty's Government all of a sudden to make some very important fiscal change—a change which necessarily involved questions of rearrangement between landlord and tenant—but he thought it was one of those things which ought to be looked at, because it bore upon another very important point, which was the voting to the Councils by owners as well as occupiers in the counties. The borough franchise, as they knew, was an occupier's franchise only; and by this Bill the franchise was only an occupier's franchise. Then there was another point involved, and that was the question of registration, and he was glad to see the Chairman of the Durham Quarter Sessions in the House at this moment. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would speak of his knowledge on this question of registration. He (Sir Joseph Pease) was told in the county he had the honour to represent a Division of, it would add very largely to their expenditure to have the Register prepared by the District Councils and by the County Councils, in addition to the Parliamentary Register for boroughs and for counties; and, of course, if that was the case in the County of Durham, other larger counties would be affected more seriously. He would appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he could not devise some means—and he believed that means might very easily be devised—by which the Parliamentary Register might be adapted for the Councils—provision, of course, being made for a schedule of ladies and a schedule of Peers? The borough franchise and the Parliamentary franchise had never yet been on exactly the same footing; but he saw no reason why, in order to save the great expense of a complicated system of registration, they should not take the Borough Register for those boroughs that voted for District and County Councils, and the Parliamentary Register for the county elections to the Councils—why, in fact, they should not so far assimilate the Borough, the County Council, and the Parliamentary franchise, scheduling the ladies and Peers. That would save a great deal of expense, and, far more than that, it would be a plan which everyone would understand. Under the system laid down in the Bill a great deal of confusion would arise through people not knowing what Register they were on. He believed the municipal and county officers would be saved an enormous amount of trouble in answering the inquiries of the people by this system. He did not intend to go into the question of the Licensing Authorities, because he thought that a question which would deserve a discussion for itself later on in Committee; but he very much agreed with the remarks which fell from the hon. Baronet the Member for North-West Manchester, who spoke just now, when he laid down very positively his view that no publican was entitled to compensation if his licence was not renewed to him. The publicans had been very safe in the hands of the Justices. He (Sir Joseph Pease) had never known—and no hon. Gentleman sitting in the House had ever known—a licence taken away from a worthy man because the Justices thought the public-houses too numerous in the district. He certainly thought the Bill would be better if it could carry forward a good deal of the temperance legislation; but on no point could the people of this country be more opposed than they were to giving publicans a vested interest in their licence. He had always thought that if compensation was given it ought to be taken, not out of the ratepayers' pockets, but out of the businesses improved for the publicans by having the number of competitors around them reduced. Some plan of that kind should commend itself to the judgment of every Member of the House. These were not the days, as the hon. Baronet the Member for North-West Manchester had said, when the temperance agitation was carried on by paid advocates, but was an agitation on the part of thousands of the best of our working classes. It could never be admitted that the publicans had vested interests in their licences, a thing to which the working classes of the country were utterly opposed, and a point which they believed even the publicans would never contest. One subject more. He was disappointed because there was no provision in the Bill for the establishment of one standard of valuation for Imperial and county and local purposes. It would be a desirable thing to arrive at that standard—and there, again, he took his lesson from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who he recollected speaking many years ago plainly and distinctly on that point. Such a plan would save an enormous amount of local trouble, and would enable every taxpayer and ratepayer to know exactly annually what he had to pay. It would be a simplification of local and Imperial matters relating to taxation, and would be a great benefit to the community. He, however, had to desire for Her Majesty's Government a happy passage for the Bill. He hoped the remarks he had made would be listened to by the House. He had endeavoured to point out the difficulties and dangers of the Bill, and he had done so with the view that these points might be thoroughly threshed out here on second reading and in Committee, in order that they might not have an inoperative measure, but one that would satisfy the wants and desires of the people.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he only refrained from congratulating the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board and the Ministry on the introduction of this Bill, because congratulation had become so general that it was superfluous. The House seemed to assent to the general principles of the Bill, and recognized the obligation it was under to the Government for the introduction of the measure. It was true that in some quarters there had been second thoughts which had not been quite in accordance with the original expressions made in reference to the Bill; but when he compared the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in introducing the Bill, and the Bill itself, as they had been asked to do from the Front Bench opposite, they both seemed to him to express those broad principles of which he (Sir Albert Rollit) was speaking, and to be in accord in all material particulars. He was also glad that the general assent of the House had been given to the principle of the Bill, because it enabled them to go on to discuss points of detail in which the measure might be materially improved. The main principles on which the Bill was based were those which were now generally, and he thought happily, accepted in this country. The representative principle was one carried out in its entirety. The principle of direct voting was also applied. They heard nothing of plural voting, and certainly there was no resort to that *ex officio* nomination which, if it had been proposed, would not in any way have commended itself to the House. And in the application of the principles he was ennunciating, there was ample concession made, he thought, to the reforming principles of the age. One point upon which criticism seemed to centre itself was this—that if the Bill had any shortcomings those were in the direction of what it did not accomplish, rather than what it did accomplish. Several hon. Members had said, and said with truth, that they would have liked to see the Bill dealing with the question of the Poor Law, education, including school attendance—powers as to which were now vested in the Guardians—and the matter of allotments; and inasmuch as allotments could, under the Act of 1887, be obtained in boroughs as well as in counties, that was one subject which might well have been dealt with in the measure. Then, with regard to the question of public libraries, and other measures of social improvement, there was much scope, if the opportunity had been favourable, for extending the work of local government. He should hope that these matters would be dealt with in the course of a short time; but so much was done by the Bill that it would be extremely unwise to jeopardize its passing by over-burdening it in other directions. It was thought better and wiser to limit the scope of the measure as had been done. It was said, too, that the Local Government Board was too much associated with masses of paper. Well, the Bill itself was, in all conscience, a mass of paper. It was sufficiently long already, and if any attempt had been made to deal with the numerous questions to which he had referred, it would have been much more formidable and much more difficult to deal with than it was. In one respect there was a matter of criticism supplied by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) in which there appeared to be a diversity of opinion, and it was as to whether the unit of local government should have been the county, as proposed by the Bill, or the parish, as suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other hon. Gentlemen who previously dealt with this matter. He (Sir Albert Rollit) would venture to observe on that point that, in speaking of the unit, the very word itself implied matters of similar denomination, and when they attempted to treat the parish as the unit for local government they were at once involved in complexities and anomalies of all descriptions. He did not know anything that could be more diverse as a unit than the parish for the purposes of local government. He found that there were 788 parishes containing less than 50 inhabitants, some consisting of only four houses; there were 6,000 parishes with less than 300 inhabitants; and 726 parishes partly within and partly without urban sanitary districts. Other parishes cut the boundaries of no less than 227 boroughs, 688 local government districts, and 49 improvement districts. He thought that in working down from the county to the parish, and ultimately giving to the parochial authorities an opportunity of remodelling their own parochial organization by the light of their own experience, the Government had grasped by far the most practical idea, and one which he hoped would commend itself to the House. So much for the principles of the Bill which had been discussed. He now ventured to ask the attention of the House while he referred to one or two points which he might call major details in the clauses of the measure, and he hoped that in regard to some of them, they would be allowed an opportunity, not only of expressing their opinions, but of freedom of judgment in carrying them out, in order, if possible, to improve the Bill in Committee. He agreed with the idea that the proposal for the appointment of selected Councillors was not a very wise one. The object of it was one in which they must all sympathize. Sufficient recognition had been already paid to the services, the very experienced and skilful services, which had been rendered by Quarter Sessions in the matter of county government and in the economical administration of local affairs. He took it that this proposal, based upon the principle of the appointment of aldermen in the case of Corporations, was designed in some measure, at any rate, to retain the benefit of those experienced services in the new local centres. He hoped that such a result would be attained if this provision were kept in the Bill. But his own opinion was that they would be much more likely to attain what they all desired if they opened no second door to gentlemen of that position, but induced them, to use the words of the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), to enter by the one door which was opened by the Bill. The hon. Member for the Ramsey Division of Huntingdonshire (Mr. Fellowes) said that in nine cases out of 10, if those gentlemen of experience and position stood for election, they would all be returned. He hoped such would be the case; but he maintained that if they left them to the hope that they would be selected, they would be offering to them that which would only be misleading, and they would only be depriving the Councils of the benefit of those services they were most anxious to retain. He asked the House to consider what would be the probable working of the Bill in reference to the election of the Councils. There would be, as many hon. Members had said, a very large amount of partizan opinion, and inasmuch as, for instance, licensing would be one of the prominent parts of the business of the Councils, there would always be an incentive to that strong feeling which would give rise to a very large amount of, perhaps not unfriendly, but still strong, faction. One party or other would prevail, and he did not hesitate to say that if the majority desired to carry its principles out in practice, it would be better, instead of nominating those who had not presented themselves for election, to elect from among themselves those who had actively sympathized with the views which had become predominant. The method of electing aldermen had been appealed to, and, speaking from the experience of one borough, he asserted that the practice of electing aldermen from within the Council itself was general; he did not think he mis-stated the experience of every hon. Member when he said that such a practice was universal. Though he himself occupied the position of alderman, he thought there was some ground for the belief that, after all, direct and frequent election was the best mode of keeping the Council in touch with the people, and carrying out what were the views of the public from time to time, and, apart from that, there was no doubt that there was some ground, as a general rule, for the election of aldermen from within the Council. It was a principle upon which he had always acted in voting for aldermen. Members of Councils had undergone the ordeal of election; they had not shrunk from going through that education which an election involved; their services, their abilities, their practical abilities, had all been ascertained by actual contact with them in the Council, and their public services were also known to the borough, which would endorse the action taken. As in the case of aldermen, so it would be in the case of selected members of County Councils. On the grounds of Party principle, as well as on the ground of general practice, it would be found that such steps as he had described would be taken, and those whom everyone desired to see on the Councils, and who, judging from the statements made in the House, were supposed to be men of essentially moderate and modifying opinions, would not be likely to be chosen. On the contrary, partizanship would select men by way of additions to its own ranks. He, therefore, hoped that as a result of this discussion the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) would consent to omit from the Bill that portion which referred to selected Councillors. If that was impossible, he ventured to make another suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman, and it was that he should reduce the term of election, at least for the selected Councillors, to three years. The reason he made that suggestion was that the change would remove one inducement to elect from within the Council by giving no advantage in the retention of office. That being so, there would be a greater disposition to go outside, and there would thus be a better opportunity for the introduction of those gentlemen whose services had been spoken of, and whose services would, he hoped, be retained. Again, he hoped that in passing this measure they would remove those features of it, or most of them, which led to the belief that there was anything not really popular about that which was a very great Bill. It had been suggested that there was a sham popularity about the Bill. That was based on such provisions as he was speaking of. He did not see, for instance, any principle upon which the Chairman of the Council should necessarily be a qualified Justice of the Peace, for now the days of property qualifications were passing away. What property qualifications could compare with the qualification of election by a Council of a County such as they had been speaking of? The respect and the regard of his fellow-Councillors and the trust reposed in a man was far higher than the mere possession of £100 a-year in land, or being assessed to the inhabited house duty to the amount of £100. These were not the days in which the mere possession of land, moreover, was the only qualification. A man might be Goschened up to the chin as well as acred up to the lips, and yet not possess the qualifications for the Chairmanship of a County Council, though no personal property qualification, such as Consols, was anticipated. The position of Chairman of a Council would be one of great trust and dignity. No one would be elected who was not fitted for the position, and the qualification given by the approbation of his fellow-Councillors would be greater than the mere possession of property in land. In a borough the Mayor was not required to have any property qualification; he acted also as Justice of the Peace for the borough; and therefore he (Sir Albert Rollit) saw no necessity for, or advantage in, applying to a similar office in a county that which was not required in the case of a borough. There was another point on which he thought popular opinion should prevail, and that was the appointment of the Chief Constable and the management of the police. In his experience of county matters he had noticed that if there was one fault to be found with the County Justices it was that they had been not very unfrequently in conflict with their own Chief Constable. That was one defect he knew of in county administration. On the other hand, in boroughs, he knew of very few cases—he would not say none—in which the Chief Constable had not been in accord with his Council, or in which the Chief Constable had not been supported by the strong feeling of the Council in reference to the performance of his duties. In the boroughs, in which the appointment of the Chief Constable rested with the Council, and in which the Council managed the police through its watch committee, he did not think any fault could be found with the administration hitherto. If it were said, as it had been said, he believed from the Treasury Bench, that the Councils of boroughs were educated in the performance of their duties so far as the police were concerned, he would remind the House that they have been self-educated. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) said that this was a compromise, and he added that compromises were not generally desirable. He (Sir Albert Rollit) ventured to say that this was a bad compromise. He knew nothing that was more undesirable than a joint administration which might affect the performance of executive duties. There had been times,—speaking from the experience of Mayor of a large borough—there had been times when it had been necessary to deal promptly with the police, he referred especially to a year or two ago, when the dynamite scare overspread the country. It was necessary at that time to take great precautions, and if it had been necessary to communicate with the Justices of the Peace, and if there had been the slightest paralysis arising from a division of opinion with reference to the employment of the police, the good results obtained would not have been secured. He thought it might be said he had dealt candidly with some of the main provisions of the Bill. He thought it a duty, when they had a good Bill before them, as he regarded this to be, to endeavour by candid criticism to make it the best Bill they possibly could. He believed that if the Bill were passed, amended on some of the lines pointed out by speakers on both sides of the House, it would be a work which would not only be useful to the country, but permanently honourable and creditable to the reputation of the Gentlemen on the Ministerial Bench. He had only to say, in conclusion, that there were some points of the Bill which recommended it in the strongest manner to all practical Local Government Reformers. Some of the restrictions which were put upon the borrowing powers, for instance, though they might be wisely increased, were most eminently desirable. The local indebtedness of this country was, as was pointed out in Professor Fawcett's work on *Political Economy*, advancing in most rapid and dangerous stages. The counties, perhaps, were not nearly so heavily indebted as boroughs at present; but the maximum—the amount of two years' rateable value—prescribed by the Bill was one which would be very large so far as some of the counties were concerned. There were two other matters pre-eminently valuable. One was the compulsory official audit of the accounts of counties which was required by Bill. He hoped that in dealing with this matter the Government contemplated the application of these powers to the boroughs which were scheduled in Schedule 4. He did not know whether that was so or not, because in certain parts of that portion of the Bill certain sections were applied to the scheduled boroughs, and in other cases such was not the case, and he could not find that a compulsory audit was prescribed by the Bill in the case of the large boroughs. There had been great defalcations in the case of some boroughs, and, therefore, he trusted that if there were any doubt as to the audit at present, there would be none when the Bill passed the House, but that all boroughs as well as counties would be compelled to undertake a periodical audit, which was so essential to the safety of the funds of the citizens. Finally, there was something which he thought was very desirable indeed; he meant the local budget. Such had been the complexity of local administration, such had been the various areas which had been affected, such had been the multiplicity of offices, and so on, that it had been impossible for anyone who took an interest in local accounts to give a satisfactory opinion as to the indebtedness of the Local Authorities, or as to their future probable receipts and expenditure. In some cases a proper budget had been presented; but in the majority of cases such had not been done, and all the works one could consult upon local administration pointed to this as a great defect, not only in itself, but because it had prevented anyone obtaining any reliable information as to local expenditure. He trusted that the Bill would pass, amended in some respects in Committee, and that it would be a lasting benefit to the country which they governed.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said, he shared in the hope expressed by the hon. Member (Sir Albert Rollit) in his last sentence, that the Bill would prove a great benefit to the country. He had observed that in the political language of the day the proper thing was to call it a frankly democratic Bill, and as such he treated it. He desired, in the remarks he intended to make to the House, to deal only with one question involved in the Bill, and he thought it was a question which had excited a great deal of interest in the country, a question which had excited quite as much interest as that of proportional representation, or of the unit of the parish, or of the creation of county aldermen, and that was the question of licensing. He believed that for every one person who was interested in the general provisions of the Bill there were, at any rate among the working classes of the population, 10 persons who took a much greater interest in how the liquor traffic was going to be dealt with. With the view of having the debate confined within proper limits and to prevent it rambling generally over the Bill, he put down a Notice of an Amendment to the second reading, not with the object of dividing against the second reading, but with the object, as he had said, of getting a fair discussion on the Licensing Clauses of the Bill. The Speaker, however, very kindly told him that it was not exactly the orthodox manner of dealing with the question. He would, however, read the Amendment to the House, because it showed what he intended, and would help to restrain the discussion within proper bounds. The Amendment he put on the Paper ran as follows:—

> "That no measure for the reform of Local Government will be just or satisfactory which imposes additional financial burdens on the public as compensation for the withdrawal from liquor sellers of privileges obtained by the grant of annual licences."

He was not able to move that as an Amendment, but, at any rate, it would be his text, and on that text he meant to preach against the new departure which had been initiated in the Bill. He should endeavour to define what he meant by a new departure. This Bill was an attempt to subsidize one class of traders in this country at the public expense; it was an attempt to fine local communities for efforts to purify themselves, and improve their own position; it was an attempt to strengthen, fortify, and perpetuate a system against which public opinion was steadily rising and would rise still higher; and what was that system? That system was the licensing system, the system that had stimulated the people of this country to consume those intoxicating drinks which produced so much harm to the community. He was justified in using this language. He remembered the late Lord Iddesleigh saying, when speaking several years ago on this question, that the national conscience was at length fairly aroused. When the national conscience was aroused, it was unjust to fortify and strengthen the system on which the drinking of intoxicating liquors was based, and to establish a vested interest in that in which a vested interest had never existed before. What was the House to understand by this Bill? Why, that beyond any doubt, it was establishing a new vested interest. He took his proof of that from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). When the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Bill, he said—

> "We say to the trade—'We recognize your claim to compensation, and we give you practically a vested interest by the Bill.'"—(3 *Hansard*, [323] 1670).

Now, that was as clear as anything possibly could be; there was not a vested interest before, but the right hon. Gentleman stated that he himself, by his Bill, proposed to give the publicans a vested interest. It was perfectly true that there had been no vested interest in the licence before. He did not want to tire the House with quotations, but really in the speech he had to make he should have to read several quotations, because it was of very little consequence what his opinion was, but it was of great consequence that he should produce the facts on which he based his suggestions. Allow him to take, in the first place, one statement made by Mr. Justice Field in the Court of Queen's Bench in November, 1882. The learned Judge stated then, in so many words, that—

> "The Legislature recognizes no vested right at all in any holder of a licence—it does not treat the interest as a vested one in any way."

And he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) challenged any lawyer in the House, no matter where he sat or to what Party he belonged—any lawyer who had any reputation to lose at all, to rise in his place and to say that Mr. Justice Field was wrong in what he said. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) said that that position was disputed. Who disputes it? Nobody but the right hon. Gentleman himself, as far as he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was aware of; but if it was disputed, he would read a somewhat longer quotation. It was so important that he could not skip a word of it, and the House would see why he quoted it when he told them from whom he quoted. The quotation was from a letter written by the late Mr. Thomas Nash, barrister-at-law, and counsel to the Licensed Victuallers' Association. He always liked to go to his opponent for his facts. Writing to *The Morning Advertiser*, a very influential paper, on the 5th of September, 1883—it was just after the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) had been indulging in the little legislation which he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) would have to allude to by-and-bye — Mr. Nash said—

> "A still more unfortunate result of the Darwen case was, that it promulgated and divulged what had hitherto been more or less of a professional secret—namely, that, subject to appeal, the licensing magistrate can refuse to renew the licence of any and every holder of an on-licence. Till then it had always been popularly supposed that the holder of an on-licence, certainly a full licence, had a vested interest, and even the teetotallers always spoke as if they recognized such an interest."

—that was a mistake, because if teetotallers said so, they must have been drunk—

> "Now, I am sorry to say, having looked into this question most exhaustively, and compared notes with many of my brethren well versed in these matters, that there cannot be the smallest doubt that, in the strict sense, no such thing as a vested interest exists, and that, subject to appeal, the magistrates can refuse to renew the licence of the largest, most useful, and best conducted hotel in England. I daresay this will stagger many owners."—

He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had no doubt it did—

> "But it is high time that the trade fully realized their position, and did not remain an instant in a sense of false security. More than this, as a matter of policy, the mere mention of the term vested interests should be avoided, as it infuriates every Court from the Queen's Bench downwards."

That was a very long quotation, and he would only now quote a very short one, which was the latest. He believed that his legal Friends would admit that *The Justice of the Peace* was one of the best authorities on legal matters, and what did it say in the last issue but one? It said there was no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman's plan—

> "Recognizes for the first time a vested interest in a licence."

He thought he had proved his case; but there was plenty more proof if hon. Gentlemen desire him to adduce it. He had proved his case, and he should really be surprised if anybody got up and said there was a legal right to a renewal of a licence in any of these cases. The legal case was gone; so far as he was concerned, he had overthrown it, but he knew perfectly well what line would be taken. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in his speech disputed the legal case, though he gave no grounds for doing so, and then he went on to the question of equity, and that was of course arguable ground. He would argue the question on the ground of equity. Let them consider the case of precedents. He had often heard the Slave Trade talked about as a precedent. The Slave Trade was abolished in 1807, and he had often heard it talked of as a precedent. The slave dealers in that day reckoned their vested interest in the Slave Trade at £100,000,000. They never got a single penny of compensation. Of course, he knew someone would get up and say—"But we paid £20,000,000 to the slave owners when the Slave Trade was abolished." Yes, so we did in the year 1833; but he wondered what we would have done in the year 1888 with a Democratic Parliament representing the people. He did not think the slave owners would have got any compensation; if compensation had been paid it would have been to the slaves; indeed, in the year 1833, the compensation was only tolerated as a means of greasing the wheels. The promoters of the Bill never would have thought of admitting the grant but as a means of ensuring the passing of the Bill. What did Lord Brougham say about the Slave Trade? He said—

> "Trade is honest, it is innocent, it is useful, it is humanizing, it is immensely beneficial. Whereas this infernal traffic is exactly the reverse, and can only be called a crime."

Why did he quote that case? The Archbishop of Canterbury said the other day that the liquor trade, as carried on among the native races, was worse than the Slave Trade. He agreed with what was stated by the Archbishop of Canterbury; but he went further, and applied the remark to the English. Then he had heard it said sometimes—"Oh, but when you indulge in the compulsory acquisition of land, you pay heavy compensation." So they did; but his answer was that they acquired nothing here—they took nothing away from anybody. The licence emanates from the Legislature; it emanates from the people themselves; the people granted the licence; and when the people chose they had the right to say—"We will withhold that licence." There was no acquiring of any property of the publican. The Irish Church was quoted. Well, but the Irish clergy were licensed to preach for their lives; but the publican had never been given a licence for his life—he was only given it for one single year. Then they heard talk of the Abolition of Purchase in the Army; but officers were entitled to serve, under their commissions, until a given age, and then they were entitled to a pension; but a publican's "commission" was only for one year, and it could be taken away. He said again that this was an absolutely new departure, and he kept repeating this because it was important. [Mr. RITCHIE dissented.] His right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie), who, he noticed, was going to answer him, shook his head. He thought, however, that the right hon. Gentleman would have great difficulty in proving that this was not a new departure. Take the case of the liquor traffic itself. Whenever had they compensated it when they had taken away its privileges? Over and over again that House had taken away an hour here and an hour there, but it had never thought of giving compensation. Look at Scotland, look at Ireland, look at Wales. In each of these countries they had taken away a seventh part of the trade from the publicans. He remembered that the late Mr. P. J. Smyth, a very eloquent Irish Member, proposing that there should be some compensation given when the public-houses were closed on Sundays in Ireland, but the proposition was laughed out of the House. The hon. Member did get some 15 or 16 Irish Members to vote with him, but the rest of the House voted against him. Let them now go back to the year 1877, when the publicans' friends—the Tory Party—were in Office. Mr. Meldon, an Irish Member, passed a Bill through the House providing that the rateable value for beerhouses should be reduced, and, at one fell swoop, 557 Dublin beerhouses were deprived of their licences. No one gave them a penny, and it was not even called an Irish grievance. Take the case of England itself. In the last century, distillation was absolutely prohibited, with the best effects to the country. No one, however, got any compensation. In Ireland, in the present century, a prohibition was enacted for a time with regard to distillation, and no one was compensated. Go from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales to our Colonies and to America, or wherever the English language was spoken—in all of these places licences had been, over and over and over again, taken away from liquor sellers, but the holders never got a penny of compensation. In Canada, our own country, had the publicans ever got compensation when they had been deprived of their licences? He remembered asking Lord Lorne what was the effect of stopping licences in Canada—what was the effect of prohibition in Canada? He answered—"Oh, it makes the whole difference between civilization and barbarism." Why should they compensate people for promoting barbarism? To come nearer home, what did the right hon. Gentleman propose to do in this very Bill? He proposed to put it in the power of the Local Authorities to shut up public-houses in England on Sundays, Good Friday, and Christmas Day, and he did not give a penny of compensation. Surely, if robbery was right, it was right on every day of the week; if it was wrong, it did not make it better to do it on a good day. The right hon. Gentleman said—"I will rob them on Sundays, Good Friday, and Christmas Day; but if the hon. Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland tries to rob them on week-days, he is a notorious villain." Now, he came to the case which the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well he would come to. It so happened that, in the year 1882, when the Liberals were in Office and the right hon. Gentleman sat upon the Opposition Benches, he brought in a capital Bill. There was at that time a certain class of liquor dealers who were able to get their licences irrespective of the will of the magistrates, but his right hon. Friend, by the Bill he brought in, put these men on the same footing as ordinary publicans. The right hon. Gentleman carried his Bill through the House, and he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) remembered complimenting the right hon. Gentleman upon his successful effort. The men who were thus dealt with came up to get their licences. It was at a place called Darwen, and when they came before the bench, the magistrates said—"No; a Bill has been passed which gives us the same power over you as we have over the ordinary publican," and they refused 34 licences. The holders of those licences went away without 1*d*. of compensation, and probably they were now rotting in workhouses and cursing the name of his right hon. Friend. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham talked as if it were a system to compensate people when they altered the laws. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) said it was not a system, and no one had ever treated it so. That House was full of landlords and persons who held land; many of them were alive in the days before Free Trade. What was their position then? There was a law in that country by which the produce of their lands was artificially made dearer, and their land the more valuable. Popular opinion changed, Free Trade was passed, the artificial price of the produce of the land was done away with by legislation, and the landlords said they were going to be ruined. No one, however, gave them a penny of compensation, and why should the landlords of public-houses get any compensation? And then there were the Irish landlords—poor fellows, they were always being got at in some way or other. In 1881, Parliament commenced with them, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had not many bowels of compassion for them in those days. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had now; but this was the way he talked about the landlords in 1881. Let the House remember how he talked now about compensation, and contrast that picture with this, contrast the former days with these days. In 1881, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) speaking about Irish landlords, said—

> "I cannot conceive that they have any right to claim compensation for the restriction and limitation of powers which they ought never to have been permitted to enjoy. In our English Legislation there are numberless precedents in which legal rights have been found to be in conflict with public morality and public interest, and have been restricted and limited, and I am not aware of any such cases in which compensation has been given to those who have been thus treated."

That was pretty good, considering the speech the right hon. Gentleman had made to-night. Well, he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) hoped he had proved to the House, first of all, that no legal right to compensation existed; and, secondly, that there was no precedent for it. Now he came to argue the point as well as he could on the ground of equity. When they took public money, and gave it to certain persons, he presumed they gave it to them for some services rendered by them; if they did not, they were wronging the public. Now, what national services had these drink sellers done that they should be endowed with a sum of national money? Soldiers were given large sums of money when they had risked their lives in killing other people for the good of their country. It might, perhaps, be said that there was some similarity between publicans and soldiers. He admitted that publicans were engaged in a most deadly trade. If they looked at the returns of mortality, they found that there was no more dangerous trade than that of the publican; the death rate among those who dealt in alcohol was higher than that of any other trade. Therefore, they ought to be obliged to the publicans for their services, but still they were not on the same footing as soldiers, for they had not done anything to defend the country. On the contrary, Sir William Gull said that the article which they were licensed to deal in was the most destructive agent known to the faculty, and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) once said, and he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) supposed the expression had been quoted three or four times a night ever since at public meetings, but notwithstanding that he should quote it again—"that greater calamities are inflicted on mankind by intemperance than by the three great historical scourges—war, pestilence, and famine." He did not want to use strong language himself, but he liked to quote it. There was once a great brewer, the late Charles Buxton, who had a seat in that House, and surely he was a competent authority, who wrote an article in which he said—"that the struggle of the Church, the library, and the school house with the public-house and the gin shop was one development of the war between heaven and hell." Why they should compensate those who carried on that war against their fellow-countrymen exceeded his comprehension. What had the publicans done? Were they great discoverers? The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) two or three years ago discovered Ireland, and had been made Leader of the House. These publicans had discovered a way of getting £120,000,000 a-year out of the pockets of their fellow-countrymen. Had they done anything for art and literature? Was the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) going to reward them, because they were, as Lord Chesterfield in the last century described them, "artists in human slaughter?" Let him ask any of the clergymen of the Church of England, friends of the right hon. Gentleman and of the Conservative Party, whether they believed that the liquor trade had done any good in their district. Let the right hon. Gentleman produce a single man who would say—"a publican came into my parish, and the people have become more moral and sober than they were before." The right hon. Gentleman knew that such a thing was absurd; he knew that every clergyman, Poor Law Guardian, and schoolmaster would say, if asked, that the places where liquor was sold were the curses of the community in which they were placed. Yet the dealers in intoxicating liquor were the people the right hon. Gentleman was going to compensate out of the hard earnings of the people of the country. In making these remarks he was not finding fault with the men but only with their trade. He had no right to find fault with the men; they acted under the law, and they in the House of Commons were responsible for what the publicans did. The publicans were answerable to the law, if they broke the law; but so long as they conformed to the law, and Parliament did not alter it, Parliament was responsible, and it would be a cowardly thing to blame the drink sellers. Many of them were doing a great deal of good. He did not know whether the House had ever heard the story of an American who went to Dublin? This man was shown over all the great works of Guinness. First of all, he was taken to a church, a splendid church; he was next taken to a school, also a splendid school; then he was taken to the brewery where the money was made. The American then said—"He appears to me to be a most remarkable man, for he seems to run education, salvation, and damnation." Talk about ruining these men, they would find some channel for usefulness and profit. Hon. Members need not be afraid on that score. Now, he wanted to know why the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) had meddled with these people at all? Why, because he was obliged to do it; he would not have touched a hair of their heads if he could have helped it, but he had meddled with this question because he knew there was a demand from public opinion outside. What did public opinion demand? Why, for the last generation, more or less, there had been a demand; the demand was ever growing for power for the people to protect themselves from the establishment of drinking shops among them. They wanted to be protected from nuisances. Now, there again was a strong thing to say, but he would give his proof—he did not say it himself. It had been stated in *The Edinburgh Review*, that the liquor trade was a nuisance, "physically, socially, morally, and politically," and the people felt it in consequence, and had sent innumerable Petitions to that House of Commons. Three times that House had declared by solemn vote, that the people of that country in their own localities ought to have the right to protect themselves from these places. He must quote again to make the matter sure, but he would only quote one of the Resolutions—namely, the last. He succeeded in getting the House to pass the Resolutions twice, and as nothing was done, he got a third one passed, and this time the House said the matter was urgent. Since then the House had done nothing. The last Resolution was—

> "That the best interests of the nation urgently require some efficient measure of legislation, by which, in accordance with the Resolution already passed and re-affirmed by the House, a legal power of restricting the issue of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors may be placed in the hands of persons most deeply interested and affected—namely, the inhabitants themselves"

He was happy to say that the Resolution was supported by six Members of the Cabinet of that day—April 27th, 1883—and that one of those persons who supported it was the great compensator the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Now, that was what the people wanted, that was what they asked for, and there was no great demand for anything else regarding the licensing system. There were Gentlemen, like the hon. Gentlemen who spoke that night, who were anxious for the reform of the licensing laws. He gave them all honour, they represented a number of persons outside the House, and those persons were trying to make the best of a bad thing; but there was no great popular demand for such a reform of the licensing system. What was demanded was power for the people to protect themselves against the licensing system, whatever it might be. They simply said—"Leave the system as you please, or alter it as you please; but, whether it remains as it is now or whether it is altered, all we want is one little clause which shall say no licensing authority shall place these drink shops in a district where the people by a large majority say they do not want them." That was the whole thing. People seemed to think sometimes that he advocated something that was in opposition to other people. Nothing of the sort. His little clause would fit into anybody's Bill. All they objected to was living in England under a Coercion Act by which licensing authorities were able to force liquor shops on places where they were not wanted. ["No, no!"] Yes; the House knew well enough that he was speaking the truth when he said that that was really what the people of England wanted. As he had said, the House had passed three Resolutions; but they had always been told to await the carrying of them out until the Local Government Bill was introduced. Really, it was like the old story of a man who was brought up for breach of promise of marriage, and he said it would be very hard to punish him, because he was perfectly willing to fulfil his promise in the year 1980. It looked to him like that; they never seemed to get forward when waiting for a Local Government Bill. That Bill, however, came at last, and they heard the able speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). He was sure that, wicked Radical that he was, the right hon. Gentleman would not be angry if he complimented him upon the ability he displayed on the introduction of the Bill. The Bill came at last, and when he heard the sentence fall from the right hon. Gentleman's lips—"We transfer the licensing power from the magistrates to the elected authorities," he was awfully pleased. He knew, directly he said that, that the corner stone was out of the old rotten edifice, and that it was only a question of time when the edifice would tumble about their ears. He was pleased with the right hon. Gentleman for taking the first step in advance in a path on which he was ready to extend the helping hand of fellowship to the right hon. Gentleman. But the President of the Local Government Board had spoiled it all. If he had stopped there, and simply said—"We transfer the licensing powers from the magistrates to the local bodies," he would have done a good thing, he would have taken a long step; but he took a most extraordinary course, and also fell foul of him (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). The right hon. Gentleman, he said, was a greater democrat than he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was. He said, speaking for the Government—"We have more confidence in the elected bodies than the hon. Member for Cumberland." Well, perhaps he might have more confidence in the elected bodies, but he had not so much confidence in the people who elected them. What he meant by him not having confidence in them was this. He knew, as he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) knew, that if they gave power to do evil to any set of men, elected, or selected, or born, or bred, or anybody else, they would do that evil. That was all he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) meant by saying he had no great confidence in them. Why should he have? There were a great many of his Scotch fellow-Members sitting here, and they knew as well as he that, for generations past, elected bodies upon Councils had had power of licensing; and they knew as well as he that the demand for local veto against even these Local Authorities was as great in Scotland as it was in England. But if the right hon. Gentleman had this confidence in the people of which he boasted, and which he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) hoped the right hon.

Gentleman really felt, he asked him why did he block, hamper, thwart, and obstruct these bodies, after he had got them constructed? He made it more difficult than ever to get rid of a licence by his system, and when he talked of trusting people, it was a regular farce. Time would not allow him to go minutely into the machinery the right hon. Gentleman proposed; but he might say that it was elaborate machinery, and was like the Registration Laws which were intended to prevent people getting on the register. This machinery was intended to prevent people from getting rid of public-houses. He saw it stated somewhere that the "option of the electoral division is non-existent as against the will of the licensing division, and the option of the licensing division is non-existent as against that of the County Councils." What chance would they have with these County Councils, far away from the people, and not knowing the people of the locality? Imagine the people going up to one of them, and coming before Alderman Chaplin or Alderman Barttelot. Why, they would never get rid of a public-house at all. The right hon. Gentleman knew very well that the great nuisance which had hitherto existed, under the licensing system, was that there was an appeal from the people who knew something about the matter, to the people who know nothing about it. It appeared that the right hon. Gentleman wished the matter to be passed through one sieve after another, in the hope that at last a sieve would be found too small to let it get through. He wished the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) were there, because he had something to say about him. The noble Lord said that the temperance people—he was a great authority with the temperance people—ought to take this Bill, because Local Option was embalmed and enshrined in the Bill. It was indeed. It was embalmed, it was enshrined, and it was dead and buried. It was only fit to be kept in a Tory Museum as a specimen of "how not to do it." No; he got a resolution this morning which seemed to him to put the position with regard to this Bill very clearly. It was a resolution passed by the North of England Temperance League—by men who had spent their lives in trying to benefit their fellow-creatures by getting rid of intoxicating drinking, and who know even as much about the matter as the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington. Mr. Arthur Pease was in the chair, a staunch supporter, a fanatical supporter of the present Government, and what did the resolution declare? It declared that "the Government proposals were calculated to delay, distract, and prevent just and righteous legislation on the matter, and merited hearty condemnation." Now, he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) said, and he said it deliberately, that this scheme for thwarting local opinion and for endowing decayed liquor sellers was a deliberately devised plan to hoodwink and rob the nation. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) would have to answer that. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) would give his proof. First of all, he would call the Prime Minister. What did Lord Salisbury say at Newport, a good while ago? He found it necessary when he got to Wales to talk about drink—everybody must talk about drink when they went to Wales. Talking about this Bill, for the Bill was on the stocks even then, Lord Salisbury said—

> "One reason why the Local Authority would be a good authority to manage the licensing question is that if any unfair encroachment is made on the industry of the publicans or others, fair compensation undoubtedly must be given, and the Local Authority would have to provide that fair compensation, and I believe that the terror of having to provide that fair compensation would furnish no inconsiderable motive to induce it to be very chary of withdrawing such licences"

The noble Marquess would give the people an instrument with which to defend themselves, but fine them if they used it. That was statesmanlike was it not? When he read that scheme for hoodwinking the people, he said to himself—"Mr. James Lowther was not very far wrong when he said at York last winter that there was as much honour on the turf as there was in statesmanship." Now, he came again to the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who was even more frank, if possible, than the Prime Minister. The noble Lord went to Sunderland, and made there a very remarkable speech, perhaps the most remarkable political speech of the Recess. He said—

> "I have had great and peculiar opportunities of ascertaining what I may well believe to be

the general prevailing tendency and disposition of the mind of the Tory Party in Parliament and in the country, and, though possibly here and there I may go a little beyond it, still I do not think I shall be very far out."

He made a splendid speech in one sense. He made one of the grandest indictments against the liquor traffic he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had ever read, and he said—"Oh! I only wish I could speak like that at Alliance meetings." The noble Lord told his audience how a police magistrate told him—"That at least two-thirds of all the crime which came before him arose from the unrestrained sale of drink"—he was wrong there, because there was no unrestrained sale of drink—"what I may call the fatal facility of recourse to the public-house and the gin shop." It was that fatal facility they sanctioned by their legislation, and which the right hon. Gentleman was doing very much to perpetuate. He was told it was one of the finest spectacles ever seen. The platform from which the noble Lord spoke was filled with liquor people, and their faces were studies. He heard a rumour—he did not know whether it was true—that one man had a fit. The noble Tory Democrat was very severe on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), who, he said, had voted for the Resolution of the hon. Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland, and yet had done nothing. He said there was no reason why—

"Legislation which affects the health, the lives, and the morals of millions of individuals in the country ought to be retarded or delayed on account of Constitutional organic changes in the relations between Ireland and Great Britain. But although Mr. Gladstone was vague, I will, with your permission, not be vague."

There was laughter and cheers, and a few sentences further on the noble Lord said—

"But up to this point I am still vague, and you may say—'Would you give to the Local Authority power to prohibit totally all sorts of drink within their district?' Well, I would, and I would not—"

There was again laughter, and a cry—"Let's have it out"—

"In theory I would, and in practice I would not."

There was more laughter and loud cheers from the licensed victuallers on the platform. Was there ever such a speech as that? It reminded him of the Yankee, who, when he was asked if he was in favour of the Maine Law, said—"Yes, I am in favour of the Maine Law, but I am agin its enforcement." The noble Lord went on to reveal the whole plot, and to throw a ray of light on the whole policy of the Government. He said—

"If you deal genuinely with the question, I do not think you could withhold from the Local Authority practically unlimited powers with regard to the drink question; but I would introduce two very salutary checks upon any impulsive or fanatic or harsh action, and they would be checks connected with the pocket."

And his checks were the transferring of all licence revenue to Local Authorities, and compensation for vested interests. That was his scheme, a scheme of robbery and jobbery and bribery all round. Well, now the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had played a melancholy part. He had a grand opportunity, an opportunity such as seldom fell to the lot of a statesman. For generations his poorer fellow-countrymen had asked for this power of protection. He might have given it them; he might have made the question his own, and done what the Liberal Government, for some reason or other, had so far refrained from doing. He might have taken away a great political grievance, a grievance which was always troubling them in their political fights wherever they took place. He might have done that, and thus have made an everlasting name, and earned the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen. Instead of that, what had he done? The people had asked for bread, and he had given them a stone. Instead of taking the manly course of trusting his fellow-countrymen, he had preferred to be the humble instrument of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, the great apostle of sham. Instead of having done anything for the benefit of his fellow-countrymen, he would be known through history as the first man who in the British House of Commons attempted to legalize blackmail. He (Sir. Wilfrid Lawson) did not know whether this House would pass this scheme or not. Of course, it might be passed by the aid of recreant Radicals, who would vote for anything; but if it was passed, the Government should have the responsibility and the Government should have the shame. Although they might succeed now, if there be a spark of Liberalism left, the Liberal Party would never rest until it reversed a policy like that, a policy, in his opinion, never exceeded in the meanness of its conception, in the injustice of its scope, and in the cruelty of its bearing upon the struggling and industrious masses of this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The House always listens with a considerable amount of pleasure to the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), because what he has to say is always spoken in a kindly and humorous way, and they believe thoroughly in his sincerity when advancing opinions on questions of this kind. I do not think the House will feel that the hon. Baronet on this occasion has greatly advanced the cause he advocates by the position which he has taken up upon this occasion. He has used very much the same arguments to which we have been accustomed now for a great many years; and it would seem that no proposal could possibly be made short of that which he has always advocated which is likely to be in any shape or form acceptable to him. I am, therefore, glad to think that in dealing with this question we have others to consider besides the hon. Baronet. All those who are advocates of temperance reform do not belong to the extreme school of which the hon. Baronet is the leader, and if we, in attempting to deal with this question, can hardly expect to be able to satisfy the hon. Baronet, we do hope that the proposals we are making with this measure connected with the Liquor Question—which are of a more advanced character than any proposals which have been made by any Government on the point—will be acceptable to the great body of reasonable men. After all, it is they whom we hope and desire to satisfy, and if we were to attempt to satisfy the hon. Baronet, I am sure we should have the great majority of reasonable men against us. I do not propose to enter at any great length into the arguments of the hon. Baronet. My hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) will, I have no doubt, be able to deal satisfactorily with the question raised by the hon. Baronet as far as its legal aspects are concerned; but there are one or two points to which I would briefly refer. The hon. Baronet has offered to extend to me the right hand of fellowship if I will only embrace the doctrines which he has propounded to-night. I have had enough of the right hand of fellowship from the hon. Baronet. He reminded me that with reference to a measure which I passed through the House dealing with off-licences he extended to me the right hand of fellowship. Where has it landed me? I dissent altogether from the hon. Baronet in his interpretation of the result of that legislation. But the hon. Baronet finds fault with the two main provisions of our measure with respect to licensing—our authority and compensation. He tells the House that it has more than once committed itself to Resolutions which he proposed embodying the doctrines which he preaches. It is hardly necessary for me to remind the House that although the House of Commons has passed on more than one occasion Resolutions on this subject initiated by the hon. Baronet, they have never passed any Resolution at all approaching to the proposals which he has so often made in the country. The hon. Baronet has said that nothing short of giving the people the power of voting whether or not the liquor traffic shall be carried on will be satisfactory to him; but he knows very well that, although he was able to obtain a majority in the House on more than one occasion for the Resolution he proposed, yet five out of six Members who spoke in favour of his Resolution, denounced the proposal he had made.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: They all voted the right way.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, truly; they voted for an abstract proposition of temperance reform and of some kind of Local Option; but nearly every Member who spoke on that occasion—among others the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), who was at the time Home Secretary—entirely dissented from the principle of Local Option and from a Local Authority being elected *ad hoc.* His idea of the mode of proceeding on the liquor traffic was to entrust the Local Authorities properly elected for all local purposes, with the power of dealing with that question along with other questions. We also propose that those bodies shall be elected for all purposes—shall deal with that question along with other questions; but we take especial pains in the majority of elections of this Authority, to secure that those who are elected from the licensing division, shall have the practical decision of the question in their hands. The hon. Baronet said we had surrounded that question with safeguards; so it ought to be. The hon. Baronet objects to the safeguards, but he knows that we lay on the County Council the obligation of assenting to the proceedings of the Licensing Committee, except for certain reasons. Further than this it is impossible for us to go. The hon. Baronet objects also to paying compensation. He was very severe on those whom he called "the recreant Radicals," for their attitude on this question; but I do not know whether he will apply the same language to the right hon. Gentleman whom I am now about to quote on the subject of compensation. That right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I should have been better pleased with the matter of the Resolution, if my hon. Friend (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had included in it some reference to the principle of equitable compensation. I do not want my hon. Friend to commit himself upon that point, but I want a frank recognition of the principle that we are not to deny to publicans, as a class, the benefits of equal treatment, because we think their trade is at so many points in contact with, and even sometimes productive of, great public mischief. Considering the legislative title they have acquired, and the recognition of their position in the proceedings of this House for a long series of years, they ought not to be placed at a disadvantage on account of the particular impression we may entertain—in many cases but too justly—in relation to the mischiefs connected with the present licensing system." (3 *Hansard*, [253] 363.)

The speaker of those words was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), so that, although I would not attempt for a moment to quote to the hon. Baronet the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) in support of the theory of compensation, yet I think I may fairly and with reason quote his great Leader in support of the principle. But further than that, the hon. Baronet speaks about wringing this compensation out of the hard earnings of the poor. Now, what is the fact? We say to the licensed victuallers—"We undoubtedly place you in a position of greater advantage than you now occupy." Their position is that their interest in this matter is being constantly attacked by the hon. Baronet and those who are associated with him; and we say to the licensed victuallers—"Placing you, as we do, in a stronger position for resisting attack, we call on you to pay for the improved position that we have given you, and we provide for the raising of a sum from yourselves amounting to £300,000 a-year, out of which compensation may be paid." There never was a more fair or reasonable proposal on the subject put before this House; and whatever may be the views of the hon. Baronet and those who are associated with him, I believe that the proposals which we make in this Bill will commend themselves as reasonable proposals to reasonable men, and more than that we cannot undertake to do. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in the course of his speech, asked us what we intended to do in regard to the licensing proposals; and he seemed to think, from words that had fallen from me, that the Government, having made these proposals, would rest content with having made them, and would not be desirous of unduly pressing them; and he asked what are the intentions of the Government in the matter. Well, the intentions of the Government are—as they ever have been—to ask the House to come to a decision on this point upon the basis which we have suggested. The Government intend to adhere to the Licensing Clauses of their Bill, and they will ask the House to come to a decision upon them; and in this, I believe, we shall be doing that which the large body of those who support us wish to have done. I am also happy to think that my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Manchester (Sir William Houldsworth)—who has long been known as one of the leaders of the Church of England Temperance Association—is satisfied that, on the whole, the basis of our proposal is a sound and equitable one, and one which he desires us to maintain. Now, passing away from the question of licensing, I have to say to the House that I feel it is somewhat unusual for a Minister in charge of a great Bill like this to rise to address the House upon it until towards the close of the debate; but there are many circumstances in connection with this debate which seem to suggest that it would be convenient for me on this occasion to depart somewhat from that course. In the first place, as the House is aware, there is more than one Amendment on the Paper, and it is impossible to know or to make sure that an Amendment may not at any time be moved to the second reading. If it were moved, then the debate must necessarily become somewhat restricted, and one could hardly enter into questions which one would desire to enter into, and which, indeed, it is necessary that one should enter into; and another reason is that there are one or two extremely important matters that have been dealt with in the course of the debate which I think it desirable that I should speak upon, and which only the Minister in charge of the Bill can adequately deal with. Before passing on to them, however, I desire to say one or two words in reference to the speech of my hon, Friend the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney). No one who heard that speech could fail to be greatly struck with its ability or to be filled with admiration at the eloquent manner in which my hon. Friend put his views before the House. And I must say that as he went on with his speech I felt more and more my great regret at being unable to adopt the plan that he advocated with so much earnestness, sincerity of conviction, and eloquence. I was very much struck with almost the last remark which he made, and which is really an answer to the whole case that he presented—namely, that public opinion was not sufficiently advanced to have justified us in introducing the proposal which he advocated into our Bill. That, I think, he must admit was an objection which is fatal to his whole scheme. But I will go further, and say that if we had proposed in our Bill such a scheme as that which he advocates, I am satisfied that the House of Commons would never have assented to it. The hon. Gentleman advanced much in support of his scheme; but surely every argument that he used was an argument in favour, not of its partial adoption by the authorities that we are about to institute, but in favour of its adoption in all elections throughout the country. The hon. Gentleman had an opportunity of making a similar appeal to the House of Commons when the last Reform Bill was passing through the House, and he met with no encouragement from the right hon. Gentleman, who was then the Leader of the House; and I am sure that he will expect from me what I am about to say—namely, that the encouragement that was then withheld from him must again be withheld by Her Majesty's present Advisers. I do not believe, whatever may be the merits of the scheme—and its merits are undoubted—I do not believe that the country is ripe for any such scheme; and I think that the hon. Gentleman himself knows that that is the case. He said that our single-member areas are objectionable, and he quoted the Bill which was passed through the House on the subject of medical relief as an argument against our plan. Now I want to ask him—Does he believe for a single moment that if the system of election, instead of being single-member seats, had been the old system, it would have made the smallest difference in the action or the opinions of the Members of this House, or would have in any degree altered the result that had taken place? [Mr. COURTNEY: Yes.] The hon. Gentleman says he does. I venture to say he is almost singular in this House in that belief. I would say for myself, in the most unqualified manner, that I do not believe the result would have been in any degree different if Parliament had been elected under the old rather than the proposed new system. The hon. Member insists on the advantage of three-member areas. I acknowledge that there are great advantages in this system, but there are also great disadvantages, and not the least of the latter is the enormous additional expense that would be involved in the Election. Many questions have been asked in the House of me as to what would be the probable expense of the elections under the Bill, and I have given such information as I had at hand; but there can be no doubt whatever that, both with reference to the individuals standing for election and the cost that would be placed on the rates, if we were to adopt the system which the hon. Gentleman advocates, the expense would be very largely increased. The hon. Member says that by our system we shall have great turmoil and excitement going on throughout the country at every election. Well, but would not that be greatly increased if we adopted his system—the three-member system—by which an election would take place every year; instead of having the turmoil throughout the country every third year, we should have it every year? [Mr. Courtney: No, no!] I understood the hon. Gentleman to argue that the three-member area of the Town Councils was greatly preferable to ours; and while, of course, arguing in support of his own proposal, he yet argued in support of that system, even without his proposal, in preference to ours. Surely, the hon. Gentleman did in the course of his argument deprecate the Council being changed every three years, and support the mode by which an annual election would take place. I understood him to say that he preferred a system by which one-third should retire every year in preference to ours. ("Hear, hear!") I find that I am confirmed in that impression by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham.

Mr. COURTNEY: Whatever my opinion may be of the greater merits of the system of one-third retiring every year, I never argued in favour of it. I do not consider that is worth much attention. My idea was that the whole Council should be elected, as proposed, every third year; that the elections should not be multiplied; but that when elected the councillors should be in batches.

Mr. RITCHIE: I am perfectly well aware that the hon. Gentleman advocated that, and I am sorry if I misunderstood him; but I thought that he advocated as a better system than ours the present system of election to Town Councils which takes place each year. But I will say no more on that point. The hon. Gentleman made some remarks on selected members, and objection has been raised in more than one part of the House, but especially on the other side, to our proposal in this direction. A curious anomaly would exist if we did not adopt the provision of the Municipal Corporations Act with reference to this matter. We propose that certain large boroughs shall be counties in themselves; and if we had not adopted the system of selection, the large boroughs which will be made counties would have selected members in the Council while the Council for the county proper would not. I think the system of selection is a good system. It secures continuity, and enables a Council to select men who would not otherwise come forward—men of eminence who could bring to the Council special knowledge on many matters relating to Local Government. But whether good or bad, the answer has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. We do not propose in this Bill to amend the Municipal Corporations Act, but to extend its provisions throughout the country, and in doing that we believe that we have taken the best course we could. I would say a word of warning here. This Bill is not put forward with any idea of remedying defects in the existing law. We propose to set up an authority, to transfer powers, and to make use of existing legislation; but if we attempted to remedy the defects which some people think exist in the laws which are on the Statute Book, and which relate to Local Government, I am certain we should never pass this Bill in one or in half-a-dozen Sessions. I would therefore appeal to those who are interested in the passage of this great Bill not to attempt to defeat it by proposing Amendments to existing laws. That can be done afterwards. All we do is to apply existing laws, and we ask the House to take those laws without Amendment, and at the same time without prejudice to what may occur in the future. When the Municipal Corporations Act was passed, so far as I remember, no single voice was raised against selected Councillors. The hon. Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall urged that more freedom should be given to the County Council in relation to the licence duties—more freedom for raising and lowering them. We quite feel the force of the arguments he used, but we find it impossible to meet those arguments. The licences taken out in one county are to run throughout the whole country. The liquor licence is only one of the licences, and curiously enough the hon. Gentleman has fixed upon that one licence in regard to which we do give power.

Mr. COURTNEY: I was speaking of other modes of taxation besides licences. My speech would have been intolerably long if I had entered into detail throughout; but I may say now, that what I had in my mind as the tax to be handed over to the County Council, and to form the mainstay of county finance, was a greatly reformed and extended House Duty.

Mr. RITCHIE: I understood the hon. Gentleman to refer to the whole of the duties which we transfer. We would gladly have given some amount of elasticity in the rise and fall of those duties, but it was impossible for us to do so, because it is essential that they should be the same throughout the whole country. The hon. Gentleman spoke about the scramble which would be made for indoor paupers. What is the inducement for a scramble? He is aware that a somewhat similar system to that proposed has been in operation in the Metropolis, but I do not know that the inducement of 4*d.* for indoor paupers is sufficiently great to make the authorities scramble to create indoor paupers. As long as the expenditure is greater there is no inducement for them to scramble by making indoor paupers to obtain a larger share of the grant than they otherwise would. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham made a speech for which we are extremely grateful to him—[*Ironical Cheers*]—I do not know what those derisive cheers, especially from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) mean. I undertake to say, grateful as we are for the speech which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has made in support of us, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield would be ten times more grateful for a speech from the right hon. Gentleman in support of himself and his friends. I say again, we are very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, because I know that there are some provisions of this Bill which he would desire to amend, but he sees that the principle is of such enormous importance that he is not disposed to sacrifice it. The right hon. Gentleman spoke about the payment of school fees for non-pauper children. These fees are now paid by Boards of Guardians, and I agree with him that it is by no means desirable that the parents of these children should be brought into contact with the Poor Law administration. We shall, therefore, gladly adopt his suggestion that the powers given to Boards of Guardians in this direction should be transferred to the District Councils. With regard to parish administration, I quite agree that there should be some reform in these matters. There is plenty of scope for it. But that is a very different thing from the point taken up now as the great cardinal object of this Bill. Some right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite desire to set up a parish council with considerable powers of authority to do—they do not know quite what. But they think that this parish cry is a very good cry. Some hon. Gentlemen say that unless the parish council is set up the labourer will have no voice in the local government, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) said that the labourer in the rural districts should have the same powers of Local Government as the labourer in the towns. That is precisely what we propose to give him, and he surely does not demand more than that. We give the labourer the same individual power in the election as will be possessed by any other ratepayer, and to say that we give him nothing is absurd. We shall create, I believe, a new feeling of municipal life throughout the county districts by this Bill, and we propose to set up a body altogether apart from questions of Poor Law administration, in the election of which body the labourer will have a vote. I acknowledge that something should be done in reference to parish matters, but you must deal with parishes by way of consultation and division. We shrink from such an undertaking as is suggested, when the Local Government Board knows that again and again the strongest objections have been made to the alteration of parish boundaries. To have overloaded our Bill with the reform of this comparatively insignificant matter would have hampered the passage of the Bill too much. Besides, the County Councils are eminently qualified to deal with the matter; we preferred to leave it in the hands of County Authorities representing the people in the parishes; and we believe that the duty is one which they will willingly undertake. If it is imagined that we ought to set up anything like parish councils to do sanitary work, I say at once that that would be a retrograde step; it would not tend to good administration, but it would greatly retard it. In support of that opinion I have only to refer to the report of the Sanitary Commission who were appointed in 1869, to conduct a most exhaustive inquiry into the whole subject. In their report the Commissioners say—

> "The powers under the Sewage Utilization Acts given to Vestries as sewer authorities have been productive of little but disappointment, and there is no reason to hope that new and amended powers will be more efficiently exercised than the old. To set up Vestries as authorities under the new Statute would involve a rare combination of inconvenience. For any practical purposes of administration they cannot be said to exist in very many places. To set them up would, therefore, be in effect, though not in name, the unnecessary constitution of a new authority, or the permanent establishment of one already condemned by experience. These objections, which appeared to us conclusive against Vestries, apply also to committees of Vestries."

Although we do believe that there is a possibility of doing something to invigorate parish life with reference to small matters, we do not believe there is any prospect of setting up with advantage a parish Council charged with such important duties as the administration of sanitary matters. With reference to the police, a good deal has been said about dual control. I am sorry that our proposals are not such as to obtain the support of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. He says—You are giving the County Councils the powers possessed by municipal Bodies. Why do you withhold the power of managing the police? I do not think the analogy is quite as complete as the right hon. Gentleman thinks it is. In the first place, if we were to carry out the analogy, it would not be to the County Councils we should give the control of the police, but it would be to the District Councils. But out of 895 urban districts there are 828 with a population of of under 20,000, and if we were setting up Municipal Corporations in these districts we should not give them charge of the police. The law does not allow any place under 20,000 population to have the control of its own police. Then the right hon. Gentleman says—Why not give it to the County Council? He must be aware that the analogy is incomplete there. What is a borough? What is a county? A borough is a homogeneous area with a population long accustomed to municipal life; it is almost under the eye of those who are charged with its administration. A county is a very different thing; it is a mere aggregation of small areas; it has none of that homogeneity which exists in the borough, and which is so essential to the maintenance of the efficiency of a police force. Some hon. Members object to the proposal of a Joint Committee because they say friction will arise. But where is it likely to arise? I do not disguise the fact that, by giving the power of the appointment of the Chief Constable into the hands of Quarter Sessions, we practically give them the control of the police. But we say, with reference to the pay, clothing, and general administration of the police it is impossible for us logically to exclude the representatives of the ratepayers, who are charged with raising the funds, from a share in the administration. Therefore, we confer the administration of the police, other than the appointment of the Chief Constable, to the Joint Committee. What is to be the composition of the Joint Committee? One-half are to be Justices; the other is to be appointed by the Council, and is it likely that it will be composed altogether of those who will have no desire to support the Justices in the administration of the police? I cannot conceive that such a thing is at all likely to arise; nor do I believe there is the least likelihood of any friction. We value very highly the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and I thank him for the kind manner in which he spoke of my part in this matter. Although there are many things in this Bill which are not at first agreeable to those who have been so long and honourably associated with the management of county affairs, we are glad to see that the Justices throughout the country recognize that the Bill is a fair and reasonable Bill, and are prepared to take their part in the future administration of those affairs with which they are so familiar. I think that forms the best guarantee we can possibly desire that in the future the affairs of the counties will not be very differently managed from what they have been in the past. I am satisfied that the country gentlemen will have their influence not diminished, but increased, if they will only take the trouble to enlist the sympathy of the ratepayers themselves. One or two questions have been asked with reference to the franchise. We have proposed that the franchise shall be precisely the same as the municipal franchise, but suggestions have been made that there should be a combination of Parliamentary and municipal franchises, and I can only say that we shall gladly consider any suggestions which may be made in Committee for dealing with the ratepayers in some such way. I think it would probably be a more efficient register if some of the suggestions made are adopted, and it certainly would be simpler. Some very natural anxiety has been felt with regard to the effect of our financial proposals. I may allude shortly to the principle which we have adopted. First of all, there is the principle that grants in aid must cease. It is one which has met with universal assent. Then I think that our proposal to transfer certain licence duties is a proposal which has, on the whole, been acceptable. The question then arose—How should we deal with the duties we propose to give up? Should the proceeds of the duties which are raised in each county go to the revenue of the county, or should the amount be collected in one common purse and thence distributed? If we had adopted the latter system, the question would have at once arisen—Upon what system should they be distributed? No one would contend that the rateable value was the proper mode, because it would very often give to the district that least required it the largest amount of money. And population would not have been a desirable guide either, because the result would be to give large and prosperous communities like Manchester the largest share of the grant. In our opinion neither rateable value nor population was the proper basis. Then there is the proposal that the money should be distributed in exact proportion to the grants which we now receive. That, I think, would also be highly objectionable, because it would stereotype a condition of things which has never been regarded as embodying any principle of abstract justice. Any part of the country which had been specially extravagant in administration would get a larger share than the area which had been economical. We considered that obviously the best plan was to allow every county to have the licence duties collected within its own area. On the face of it every county has a claim to the taxation so raised. My right hon. Friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) I think goes further, and contends that the towns should have what they collect. It seems to me that there are strong objections to that. The towns are, of course, the large collecting areas for the licence duties. Now, if we had adopted a system which allows boroughs to appropriate the revenue collected within their respective areas, what would have become of the taxation of the counties? We should have this ridiculous anomaly—namely, that the counties would have had to maintain the roads surrounding those towns, and would have derived hardly any benefit from the revenue collected for the maintenance of the roads within the boroughs, and, therefore, I hardly think that my right hon. Friend can contend that that is a proper mode of dealing with the question. With reference again to the Probate Duty, we were once more confronted with the problem of what was the most equitable mode of distribution; and here again the objection which I have already stated to distributing it according to rateable value or to population holds equally good. We considered that the best test of the needs of the locality was the test of indoor pauperism. I will just show to the House by two or three figures what would be the result of the three systems in some of our districts of London. Chelsea, according to population, would be entitled to £6,000, according to rateable value £7,000, and according to pauperism £15,000. St. Pancras, according to population, would be entitled to £16,000, rateable value £19,000, and pauperism £37,000. St. George's-in-the-East, my own constituency, and one of the poorest in London, would, according to population, be entitled to £3,268, rateable value £2,209, and pauperism £13,817. It will thus be seen that if we had taken population or rateable value instead of pauperism those localities upon which the greatest amount of burden devolves, and which are least able to bear that burden, would have got the smallest grant from the Probate Duty. I am satisfied, that, although there are many objections which may fairly be raised to the system we have adopted, it is unquestionably the best system that we know, and I should be glad if any better system can be suggested. Now there has been a great demand made upon us, and a very natural demand, for some statement in connection with finance as to how the different localities would have been affected. I will state what are the difficulties in our way. The areas not being those of the geographical counties at all, there is a difficulty in making any calculation as to the amount in relation to Probate Duty, but it is a difficulty which we might have got over by calculations connected with the overlapping areas. So far as the licence duties are concerned we can ascertain the amounts which are now collected, but with reference to the new licences we cannot calculate the amount at all. It must be evident that under the new system, when the interest of localities is so great, the collection of the licensing duties within their own areas would disclose a great amount of shifting with respect to these licensing duties. But, even if we were to get a good deal of the information which I have named, still more information is wanted; not only with reference to the counties, but to all the boroughs in the counties and all the urban and rural districts. It is, therefore, impossible for us to say how each district will be affected. Take the varying circumstances of the boroughs; you have the ordinary borough which contributes to county rates for all purposes, the Quarter Sessions boroughs, and the boroughs which contribute to some only or hardly any county purposes. Then there are overlapping areas, urban districts in two or three Unions, and Unions in two or three counties. All this shows the enormous difficulties we should get into if we attempted to place before the House the financial position of the various areas in the counties. The case of Wolverhampton is successfully solved, about which the right hon. Gentleman gave us some figures the other day. But those figures were singularly inaccurate, notwithstanding the fact that there were exceptional advantages connected with Wolverhampton. It is a Quarter Sessions borough, and in one Union only. There is the fact that the right hon. Gentleman has made inquiries on the spot, yet I shall prove before I sit down that the statistics of the right hon. Gentleman are singularly inaccurate. First of all, I must demur to certain of my right hon. Friend's assumptions. He compared the urban and rural rates, and said that the average county rate was 3*d.* and the average urban rate was 2*s.* 6*d.* But, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman must have been aware when he gave these comparisons that he was comparing two things which are quite dissimilar. He was comparing the county rate, which is only for general county purposes, and which includes neither highway rate nor sanitary rate, with the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* in urban districts, which includes both. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman must admit that his comparison was fallacious.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I have taken the case of the borough ratepayers paying 2*s.* 6*d.* in the £, and contributing in that sum 1*d.* in the £ to the county, and I contend that the borough ratepayer gets no relief for his borough rate, but only for his contribution to the county.

Mr. RITCHIE: I understood that he drew this conclusion. If we give relief to the county ratepayer and the urban ratepayer by a similar sum, the relief to the county ratepayer will be 1*d.* or 33 per cent, and in urban districts 1*d.* in 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3 per cent. I say it is perfectly evident that the comparison is fallacious, because the one includes many things which the other does not. There was another fallacy in the right hon. Gentleman's argument. He spoke about the increase of the urban and rural rates in 10 years, and said that this increase, exclusive of the Metropolis, had been £2,700,000 in the urban and only £1,200,000 in the rural districts. But there is a fundamental error in this statement; and if the right hon. Gentleman had gone further he would have seen that during the same time there had been 156 new urban areas carved out of rural areas, and that 114 urban areas had been enlarged. The natural result of that operation is evident. It involves great diminution of rural rates and a great increase of urban rates, and the right hon. Gentleman will admit that this comparison is entirely fallacious. The right hon. Gentleman also contended that of the £3,000,000 of this additional grant in aid, if I may so call it, urban and rural districts ought to get relief to the extent of one-ninth of the total rates. I entirely demur to any such proposal. I consider it is unjust for two reasons. First, because of the vast difference between the purposes for which the rural and urban rates are levied. The right hon. Gentleman will admit that the great bulk of urban rates are spent for purposes which add greatly to the comfort, happiness, and well-being and health of the community, and that they not only greatly improve and add to the letting value of property in the towns, but add materially to the general prosperity of the towns. But none, or hardly any, of these advantages apply to rural rates. Hardly any of these things are caused with reference to the rural districts. Instead of adding to the value of the property, the rates often diminish the value of landed property. It is recognized, indeed, by the Legislature that land does not partake of the benefits of the money spent in this way nearly to the same extent as houses do, because it is enacted that lands shall not be assessed for more than one-fourth of the rateable value in towns. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman is a direct and palpable premium on extravagance. He says—"The more you spend the more you shall have, and the more economical you have been the less you shall have." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton says that the licences in Wolverhampton produce £5,334; the Local taxes, £2,933; and that the Horse and Wheel taxes are estimated to produce £1,680; making a total of £9,947. To this he adds 20 per cent for additional licences, making a total of £11,000. The existing grants amount to £5,650; leaving a balance of £5,350, which will, he says, be paid to the county authority. Of the Probate grant he says Wolverhampton should receive £4,860; but that it will only receive £3,260, making an additional £1,600 which will be paid to the county. Adding this to the £5,350, he calculates that £7,000 of Wolverhampton taxation will be paid to the county. He also says that Wolverhampton will have to pay £2,000 additional taxation for main roads in the county, equal to a rate of 2*d.* in the pound. The right hon. Gentleman therefore calculates that £9,000 of Wolverhampton taxation will be paid to the county, and he apparently considers that the only return which the borough will receive for this payment will be £400 for main roads, leaving a loss to Wolverhampton of £8,600. His claim is that, on the broad basis of receiving one-ninth of its local taxation, Wolverhampton's share of the Probate grant, transferred duties, and additional taxation, after payment of the existing grants, should be £5,700 over and above the £3,260 which he estimates that the borough will receive from the pauper grant of 4*d.* a-head per day for its indoor paupers. The total claim which he makes for Wolverhampton out of the Probate grant and licences, over and above the existing grants, is therefore £8,960. He also mentioned that the annual gain to Birmingham under the Bill, according to the estimate given in a local newspaper, would be about £40,000, and that, if this estimate were correct, Wolverhampton, in order to be in as good a position as Birmingham, ought to receive about one-sixth of this amount, which would be £6,666. According to our estimate the amount which Wolverhampton will receive over and above the existing grants will be made up of three items—first, 4*d.* a-head per day on indoor paupers, including boarded-out children—see Clauses 21 and 25 of the Bill; secondly, the share of the borough in the Exchequer contribution account of the county; and, thirdly, additional payments in respect of the main roads of the borough. The first of these items—namely, the 4*d.* a-day in respect of indoor paupers—we estimate at £4,336. This amount is arrived at as follows:—Mean number of indoor paupers, including boarded-out children, chargeable to the Wolverhampton Union for the year ended at Lady Day, 1888, 1,046; annual grant in respect of this number at 4*d.* per head per day, £6,363. This amount, divided between the borough and the Union in proportion to the rateable value at Lady Day, 1887, gives £4,336 to the borough. The second item—namely, the share of Wolverhampton from the Exchequer contribution account of the county, we estimate at £4,728, which is thus arrived at—Total Licence Duties and other taxes transferred to County Council, £104,251; 20 per cent additional licence duties on intoxicating liquors, £11,940; share of probate grant paid to County Council, £58,575; Wheel and Horse Taxes estimated to produce £26,000, making a total of £200,766. Deducting existing grants (including £8,386 in respect of main roads), £64,901, a balance of £135,865 is left. Of this sum the grant on indoor paupers in the borough and county will amount to £37,735, leaving a balance of £98,130. Out of this amount will have to be defrayed the cost of main roads in the county, £33,544, less the amount included above as paid from existing grants, £8,386—that is to say, less £25,158, leaving a balance of £72,972. Deducting the estimated cost of elections, £600, and sundries, £1,000, a surplus of £71,372 is left to be divided between the county and borough in proportion to rateable value. Taking the rateable value of the borough at £265,000 and that of the county at £4,000,000, the share of Wolverhampton in the £71,372 will be £4,728. Out of this sum the amount which the borough will have to contribute to the county on account of general county expenses—which, according to the latest Returns, was £1,186—will be applied for general county purposes, and the residue, estimated at £3,542, will be paid over to the Corporation. The third item which Wolverhampton will receive will be the additional payment in respect of main roads in the borough. This we estimate at £200. The total gain which we estimate that Wolverhampton will receive under the Bill will therefore be—(1) 4*d.* a-day for indoor paupers, £4,336; (2) share of borough in the Exchequer contribution account of the county, £4,728; (3) additional payments in respect of main roads, £200; making a total of £9,264, which is more by £304 than the £8,960 which the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton claims for the borough on the broad basis of receiving one-ninth of its local taxation, and £2,598 more than the amount which he estimates that the borough should receive if it were paid one-sixth of the £40,000, the amount estimated by a local paper as the gain to Birmingham under the Bill. I hope I may have further opportunities of dealing with several other points which are of great importance, and I am sure that I may appeal to the House not unduly to prolong this debate. There is no real conflict on the principle of the measure, and as for the desire of obtaining information in regard to the details of the Bill, there will be far better opportunities in Committee than in the course of any debate that can take place on the second reading. The measure which we have submitted to the House deals with a large and complicated matter, and though I know it does not meet the wishes of all, and leaves many matters to be settled in the future—although it does not profess to amend several of the laws which many people would like to see amended—yet, such as it is, it is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to pass it into law this Session. We are determined to leave nothing untried and to spare no sacrifice in order to effect this object. Her Majesty's Government feel that it would be disastrous if this question, after being raised as it has been, were left over for settlement to another Session, and they believe that though it is not a Bill that everyone may desire, yet that most unprejudiced persons will admit—what, indeed, has been largely admitted in the course of the present debate—that it is a great and valuable measure of enfranchisement, and a great and valuable measure in relief of local taxation. We acknowledge its incompleteness, but we say that this is inevitable, and we hope and trust that the House will give us every assistance in its power to pass the Bill into law. I am sure that the country will not regard with equanimity the efforts of those who may by indirect attacks endeavour to destroy it, or the efforts of so-called friends who may try to smother it by ill-advised assistance.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Caine,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 118.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he understood that it was the general wish of Scotch Members that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, and being willing to adopt that course he now moved the second reading, with a view to the Bill being sent to a Select Committee.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked, did the Lord Advocate intend the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee of Scotch Members, or a Committee constituted in the ordinary way by the Committee of Selection?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the Committee would include a large proportion of Scotch Members; but it was not advisable, and was not contemplated, to exclude other Members whose skill on the subject-matter of the Bill might with advantage be availed of.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked, whether it was the intention of the Government to adhere to the exemption of the large towns at present exempted under Schedule A.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, yes; that was so. The point would be adhered to.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman.*)

[BILL 131.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) said, he would suggest that the Bill should be read a second time with the object of referring it to the General Committee on Law. He did not know if there would be any objection to that.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, it was an extraordinary way of doing business to make such a Motion, within a few minutes of midnight, after a considerable number of Irish Members who had been present during the evening had left, having had no sort of intimation that the Bill was coming on. There was every disposition to discuss the Bill in a reasonable spirit; but it required considerable attention, and he had no doubt that, had they known this Motion would be made, Irish Members of the Legal Profession would have been present. It was unreasonable to propose that stage of the Bill at such a time. He had no intenting of "talking out" the Bill, but he trusted that the good sense of the Government would postpone the measure until such a time when those Members interested might take part in the discussion. He should be disposed to oppose the second reading; but there were many of his Friends better able to discuss the Bill on its merits, and he would like to have their advice. Several questions he would like to ask. For instance, he had never seen any of such Bills pass and not create new places. As a general rule, a Bill of this kind meant increase in salaries, the increase not being made in the Bill itself, but by a small supplementary Bill introduced as a necessity of the first immediately afterwards, whereby somebody got £2,000 or £3,000 a-year for doing work in Ireland, or else there was a fresh shuffle of offices, and one or two gentlemen got considerable promotion. After all, no practical Court of Criminal Appeal was instituted, and no good came out of the change. The question of referring this Bill to the Law Committee was one of a certain amount of importance, and the Government might have condescended to communicate with Irish Members and to consult their wishes as to whether the Bill should go to a Grand Committee or a Select Committee. He had, as he said, no intention of talking out the Bill—[*Laughter*]—not the slightest intention of doing that; but if any other Irish Member desired to speak on the subject he would be quite right in doing so. He only asked the Government that in this, which was not to be an "Irish Session," they would not bring on Irish Business within a few minutes of 12 o'clock in this hap-hazard manner without Notice.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, he regarded the proposal of the Government as exceedingly irregular in proposing the reference of the Bill to a Grand Committee, without any previous discussion of its general principle. It was a Bill that should specially come under the cognizance of Irish barristers and Irish lawyers, who knew the working of the Irish legal system, and how far the Bill would be beneficial. Especially was it desirable to know what effect it would have upon salaries. He mentioned, some 10 years since, an instance of a Bill to empower legal procedure being introduced, with promises that it would reduce the staff of legal officials at the Four Courts; but the Bill, being carried out, there had not been, so far as he knew, a single reduction, the squandering of public money going on as strikingly as ever. It was not the slightest use bringing forward the Bill without explanation. He had not read the Bill, and had heard no explanation of its contents; and it appeared to him the only reasonable course now was to adjourn the debate for resumption again when Members of the Irish Bar would be present, and give it adequate consideration. He would, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour has struck, and there is no necessity for the hon. Member to make that Motion.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882 (CLARK'S BEQUEST, &c.)

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire), in rising to oppose the scheme of the Endowments Commissioners for dealing with the Nairnside School in the parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity, said, he represented the opposition of ministers of religion in those parishes, and a considerable number of farmers, crofters, cottars, and labourers resident in the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity. The scheme proposed to take away the bulk of an endowment from a comparatively poor parish, and transfer it to a comparatively wealthy landward parish—Inverness. The bequest was made by Miss Clark within the last 30 years, a lady with whom he had a certain acquaintance, and knew to be possessed of intellectual capacity, well qualified to state distinctly her intentions with regard to the endowment. She clearly intended it for the benefit of the parish of Daviot. The matter seemed to have dwelt a good deal on the mind of this lady during her last illness, for, although she executed a testament in 1854, she, in July, 1859, added a codicil clearly indicating her intention with regard to the bequest, and died within a month afterwards. The bequest was to the effect that her trustees should devote £2,000 to the purpose of endowing two new schools in the parish of Daviot, exclusively for the use of the parish, and exclusive of the parish school. But the trustees appeared to have been more interested in the parish of Inverness than of Daviot, and although they could not, of course, go quite outside the terms of the bequest and erect a school in the parish of Inverness, they gave the benefit of the endowment to the Nairnside School, situated at the very end of the parish of Daviot, which is a long, straggling parish, some 23 miles in length and four in breadth, in close communication with neighbouring parishes, though the endowment was meant exclusively for the parish of Daviot. The Nairnside School had been successful, it was true; but it had been endowed contrary to the terms of the bequest. When the Endowments Commissioners came to deal with this endowment, it might have been expected that they would undo the wrong which had been done to the parish of Daviot; but not only had they condoned the action of the trustees, but they had endeavoured to perpetuate it, for they provided that the Governing Body of the Bequest should be for the future three members of the School Board of Daviot, one from Inverness, and one from the neighbouring parish of Croy. He objected that these last two parishes had no status whatever on a Governing Body in regard to a bequest intended exclusively for the benefit of the parish of Daviot. But the full significance of the proceeding came out in Clause 21 of the scheme, whereby it was provided that the Governors might, at any time within 12 months, on the demand of the Inverness School Board, make over, without compensation, the Nairnside school and site to the latter body. Could anything be more extraordinary than that regulation? Here was a lady bequeathing within the last 30 years the sum in question for the benefit of the parish of Daviot, and yet within this short period, because the Clark trustees had already deprived Daviot of much of the benefit of the bequest, provision was now made by which the greater part of the benefit would for ever be diverted to the benefit of Inverness parish. There were minor points of objection to the scheme; but those were the main grounds upon which he founded his opposition and made his Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the scheme for the Management of the Endowments in the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity and county of Inverness, known as Clark's Bequest, and the Nairnside School, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act) now lying upon the Table of the House."—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh.*)

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) said, he must ask the House not to accept the Motion. He believed it would be found, on inquiry, that the scheme could not be correctly described as a taking away from the parish of Daviot the benefit conferred by a bequest, and transferring it to an adjoining parish. His hon. Friend (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) said he represented a large number of residents in the parish of Daviot; but the attention of the House should be called to the fact that this scheme was settled by the Education Endowments Commissioners, after hearing everything that was to be said by those who represented all the interests in the locality; that the scheme received the approval of the Scotch Education Department; and that no objection whatever was made to it until after that approval had been given. Further, the School Board of Daviot and Dunlichity, who it was to be presumed knew something of the local feeling, were supporters of the scheme. [Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh: Not the present Board.] The parish of Daviot was a long, straggling area, and could not be isolated from the neighbouring parishes of Croy and Inverness; children of each parish attended schools in the adjoining parish. In fact, the 21st clause was designed to meet the exigencies of the case. The scheme provided that the endowment might be employed to the encouragement of secondary education by devoting a sum not exceeding £50 annually to the parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity; secondly, a sum of £10 towards the fees for the education of children of poor and deserving parents; and, thirdly, provided bursaries for competition among the pupils at Nairnside and the State-aided schools of Daviot and Dunlichity. The hon. Member was, therefore, under some misapprehension when he said the parishioners of Daviot and Dunlichity would be deprived of the benefit of the endowment. Under the circumstances, he hoped the House would not reject a scheme embodying the matured views of the Commissioners, after careful consideration of all the facts and the requirements of the locality.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) said, as one of the Commissioners, he could not add much to what had been said by the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken. In reference to the position of the Nairnside School, although it was situated at the end of a long and straggling parish, and was of use to the children of neighbouring parishes, yet the erection of the school at that place seemed to be forced upon the trustees by the terms of the settlement and the fact of there being already two schools in the middle of the parish, so that the only available site was at the eastern or western end. At both ends schools had now been established, Nairnside being one. That school supplied the wants of that part of the parish, and it also served for portions of the neighbouring parishes. The Commissioners found the school in good order, and of the greatest use, and did not feel warranted in interfering with it. He believed that the scheme, as now completed, would thoroughly meet the intentions of the lady who made the bequest, and serve the purposes of education in the district.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, he would point out that the money was not left for the benefit of any parish, but for one parish solely. The scheme proposed that the Governing Body should be composed of three members of the School Board of that parish, and two from the adjoining parishes of Croy and Inverness. But what had these last-mentioned parishes to do with a bequest left solely for the poor of the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity? The Governing Body should be appointed solely from the latter parishes. Secondly, it was proposed to hand over this school in Daviot to the landward parish of Inverness. Could anything be more monstrous than handing over the control of a school in one parish to a School Board in the next parish? Such a proposition was never made in any endowment scheme before. If the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would look into the matter, he would find it was absolutely impossible to carry it out. If a transfer were made to the landward parish of Inverness, the school would still remain in another parish, and rates could not be levied in one parish to support a school situated in another parish altogether. It was absolutely impossible, under the Education Act, for a School Board to assess the ratepayers of a parish to carry on a school outside their own jurisdiction. By these education schemes an endowment might be altered, but not the Common Law of the land.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he must again enter his protest against the extremely unpractical and absurd way in which these educational schemes were dealt with by hon. Members. ["Oh, oh!"] These schemes were prepared by the Commissioners after a patient inquiry, and they endeavoured to make the best arrangement they could for improving the advantages of an endowment to the locality. They were then laid before the Education Department, and hon. Members, who in the House denounced the scheme in such indignant terms, took no objection whatever. The matter was allowed to stand over for the usual period by the Department to see if any objection would be taken, and, none being forthcoming, the Department approved the scheme, and then not until the Bill appeared on the Table of the House was any objection urged. Everybody knew perfectly well that there was no Member of the House, except a few who happened to have studied the scheme, who could give a capable or sensible verdict on the subject. It was an unreasonable way to deal with the matter. As to the remarks of the hon. Member who had just spoken, the Scotch Department, in giving their approval, had not thought it necessary to consult the legal opinion of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he must protest against the tone of the speech in which the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had complained of the way in which the House of Commons dealt with these schemes as unpractical and absurd.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he did not object to that at all; he objected to the unpractical way in which individual Members of the House brought these schemes into discussion, knowing perfectly well that it was impossible for the House to consider them.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he equally protested against the remarks being applied to individual Members. The schemes were laid on the Table of the House in accordance with the Act of Parliament, in order that Members might take cognizance of them, and any Member had not only a statutory right but a duty to overhaul any scheme, and to state his objections, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman was in no way justified in taking the tone he had. He might have added a few words of explanation, instead of indulging in this recrimination; but he had not said a word to indicate that he had as much acquaintance with the details of the scheme as those Members whom he had chosen to reprehend for ignorance and folly. No objection had been taken, he said, while the scheme was before the Education Department. But what was the position of a poor parish like Daviot in relation to the Scotch Education Department? Most of the inhabitants were very poor. No doubt, they had an opportunity of being heard when the Commissioners were at Inverness, and, no doubt, they were heard; but, substantially, when the scheme went before the Education Department their opportunity of making their views known was gone, or practically so. He had had opportunities of watching the progress of these schemes. In regard to endowments in large urban communities, where there was a possibility of meeting and acting together, the people could do something to make their views known to the Education Department. But in scattered or poor districts, schemes diverting endowments from their original purposes, contrary to the wishes of the community, had been passed through the Department and the House without comment, simply because the people could not possibly get up an organized protest. A community like that of Daviot had no chance of making their views heard by the Department, and the only opportunity they had was in making their wishes known to the House through their Representative. The main contention against the scheme was that the proposed division was entirely contrary to the wishes and needs of the people for whom the endowment was intended. In regard to what the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) said, it should be known that since the scheme was approved there had been a School Board election at Daviot, and the new Board were unanimous against the scheme. Certainly, if his hon. Friend (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) went to a Division, he should support him; and he hoped there would be a Division, if only to protest against the tone of the Lord Advocate towards Members who were discharging a statutory duty, and doing nothing that could fairly be described as unpractical or absurd.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) said, he also earnestly protested against the remarks of the Lord Advocate, and thought the objection taken by his hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) perfectly reasonable. Why did not the Lord Advocate reply to the question of illegality that had been raised? If, as the Lord Advocate said, the House was incapable of dealing with matters of the kind, why were they submitted to the House at all, and why did not the Government make other arrangements, or provide some other tribunal? He could not see that Scotch Members were incapable of dealing with such things, and it was their duty to do deal with them. He admitted he did not know much about this particular scheme, and he had no doubt many hon. Members from Scotland were equally unfamiliar with it. It might be that only Members from the locality and the hon. and learned Member for Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities (Mr. J. A. Campbell), who made educational subjects his special study, had full information on the subject; but that did not give the Lord Advocate the right to lecture hon. Members, and talk roundabout and outside the question, without attempting to elucidate it, and show that the arrangement was a fair one. No doubt, the Commissioners thought it was; but the House had to be satisfied of this, and, instead of making a series of remarks indicating so much impatience, it would have been more fitting if the Lord Advocate had given some explanation to show the scheme was a proper settlement of this endorsement.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he was not inclined to be a supporter of the Lord Advocate; but, at the same time, he objected to being asked to vote against a scheme because of an answer the Lord Advocate had given. Surely they could discuss the matter apart from the answer of the Lord Advocate. In reference to what had been said by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), it was right to explain that opposition to a scheme of this kind really did not cost money. The scheme was first sent down to the locality, and all parties interested had an opportunity of sending in their names to the Commission, and a second opportunity was afforded by objections being sent when the scheme was before the Education Department; and, lastly, came this power of objection in the House. If the intention of the testatrix had been respected, there would have been no occasion for the Commission to interfere; they only dealt with endowments which had deviated from, or outgrown, the object for which they were intended. So far as he understood the scheme, it had been prepared with unusual care, and there was no objection to the scheme on its merits; the objection only came from one parish. But if there was never to be any alteration, the purpose for which the Commission was appointed would be entirely lost. There ought to be no Commission at all if they had no power to alter an endowment to bring it into compliance with modern requirements of population. He must support the scheme on its merits.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 35; Noes 93: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION BILL [*Lords*].

Ordered, That the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] upon Monday, 23rd April, at half-past Eleven of the clock.—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 17th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act (1878) Amendment * (68); Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment * (69).

Second Reading—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2) (38).

Committee — Report — Army (Annual) * (55); East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) * (56).

Provisional Order Bill — *Third Reading* — Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint),* and *passed.*

NEW PEER.

William Henry Lord De Ramsey—Was (in the usual manner) introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

The Lord Wigan, Earl of Crawford.)

(No. 38.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Earl of CRAWFORD, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he did not intend to weary their Lordships by going into the former discussions upon this subject. The Bill was rather more extended in its nature than any measure previously introduced into that House on the subject of electric lighting. He would, however, briefly explain the changes which he proposed to introduce into the law on this subject. Under the 2nd clause of the Bill the persons who were known as undertakers, and who provided currents of electricity for the purpose of distribution to individuals within a certain area, would be permitted to obtain certificates and to make their arrangements with the Local Authority as a licensing authority without having to go to the enormous delay and expense of applying to a central office for a Provisional Order, and of having that Order subsequently embodied in a special Act of Parliament. The cost of the Provisional Order system and the Parliamentary procedure consequent thereupon was undoubtedly very high, and in addition to that there was the grave objection that that course of action could only be taken during a certain portion of the year. Unless everything was not foreseen for the next 12 months no work practically could be proceeded with until a new Provisional Order was obtained. They had to go now into a very much larger question than was contemplated in 1882 when this Act became law. In addition to the method of procedure by licence, Provisional Order, or special Act the present Bill would enable the Local Authority to enter into an agreement with, and to grant permission to, the undertakers for their several works and purposes as set forth in this Bill. In the event of the Local Authority refusing, the Board of Trade would be authorized to step in and to say whether that refusal was a just and a right one or not. Clause 3 dealt with the description of the supply, and that was, he thought, sufficiently guarded by saying that the description or method of supply should be only made under certain rules to be approved by the Board of Trade. The application of electricity for lighting purposes had been in use for six or seven years, and in consequence of the demand the Phœnix Insurance Company in 1882 printed a set of rules for the guidance of persons who were using the electric light. By carefully following those rules accidents might, as far as possible, be avoided. The rules were first published in *The Times* in May, 1882. He had made it his business to inquire whether there was any additional risk placed upon buildings which were lighted by electricity, or in which the electric current was employed. He was informed by the Phœnix Office that no extra premium was charged on buildings prepared for the reception of electricity under the rules they had drawn up, even though other modes of lighting were also used. In regard to the question of safety for life, he was informed by the Pelican Office that where a building was wired in accordance with the rules laid down by the fire insurance offices, they considered that there was no greater danger to life than there would be in an ordinary dwelling house. Therefore he said that the Board of Trade, in framing any rules for the guidance of undertakers, ought to give great weight to the rules which had already obtained during so many years, and which were drawn up by those who were thoroughly acquainted with the subject. Clauses 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the Bill were practically taken from the Gas Act of 1847, which was incorporated in the Electric Lighting Act of 1882 as far as those clauses were concerned. Those clauses contained all that was necessary in regard to the powers to be given to undertakers in taking up streets in passing from one part of a town to another. Clause 7 gave the Local Authority power to give notice to the undertakers of their intention of doing the work of taking up and restoring the street; and Clause 17 imposed penalties, which the Gasworks Clauses did not contain, for damage or disturbance done in laying or altering pipes. Then, with regard to telephones, they were doing such excellent and valuable service that he thought it fair that no Act for electric lighting should place them in a worse position for carrying on their business. Clause 10 was intended to give them, as against the undertakers, a legal *status*, and to protect them from all possible damage by an electric lighting undertaking. He also proposed that when the undertakers were not the Local Authority, but a company of private individuals, they should pay a certain sum per annum to the relief of the rates for the privilege of being allowed to use the streets. He would suggest that the sum so to be paid should be at the rate of £20 a-mile per trench, and in Committee—if his Bill should go into Committee—he should be prepared to state the amount which that rate would realize if London were properly dealt with. Most streets having houses on both sides, two trenches would be required, thus raising the rent to be paid to £40 per mile run of street. Their Lordships would be surprised to learn to what an extent the rates of London would be relieved if this were done. The Act of 1882 prescribed the periods within which the works of an electric lighting undertaking were to be finished. He would propose to leave that question to be settled between the Local Authority and the undertakers. The next thing was that within five years from the passing of the Act all existing and future cables or wires or mains for electricity should be placed underground. Clauses 16 to 23 he had adopted from the Gas Act of 1871, and they regulated the appointment of Inspectors, the methods of testing, and the supply of the current to the consumer. Clauses 24 to 27 dealt with a matter of extreme difficulty, and his proposals were, he admitted, merely intended as a temporary measure. These clauses referred to the question of how instruments were to be used for accurately testing whether the current supplied was equal to that contracted for — a subject on which they had still to learn a good deal before they could consider themselves near perfect. He hoped by next year he would be able to work out in the laboratory a means of "standardizing" the measurement and the current. Clauses 38 to 44 dealt with measurements, and he hoped to induce the Government to make a small addition to the Weights and Measures Act, for the purpose of putting electric meters on the same footing as gas meters. The next point was that of the supply to be furnished to the general householder, and there he went on the lines of the Gas Act of 1871, which provided that any householder living within 25 yards of a distributing main should have a right to demand a supply, and that put electric undertakers under practically the same obligations as Gas Companies. But the Gas Companies had no power to object to any form of lamp the consumer might desire to use, and this Bill modified that in the case of supplying electricity, and gave the undertakers the right to discontinue the supply so long as the consumer used it in a way prejudicial to other consumers of the current. The price would be by the quantity of electricity—of energy—based on the actual quantity supplied, or by the number of hours actually used by the consumer. Clause 32, also following the Gas Act, gave a Local Authority power to require a supply for public lamps if they were within 50 yards of a current. Clause 33 dealt with the question of penalties. Clause 37 changed the existing unit of measure from 1,000 "watt-hours" to 10,000. The present unit was comparable to speaking of gas by the 100 feet in place of the 1,000 feet, and the maximum price per the present unit was so small—10*d.*—that it would be difficult, without resorting to decimals of 1*d.*, to make future reductions of price. The new unit would be 8*s.* 4*d.* for 10,000 "watt-hours," from which figure it would be easy to make reductions. It would also be provided that a Provisional Order or agreement entered into with the Local Authority might be revoked by the Board of Trade on showing (1) that the undertakers were insolvent; (2) that the work could not be carried on at a profit; and (3) by the mutual consent of the Local Authority and the undertakers; and, in the event of the Local Authority desiring to purchase, they were to give notice thereof within a month to the Board of Trade saying that the agreement was to terminate. On the subject of the purchase price, he had adopted a suggestion of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) used with great success in the purchase by Government of Indian Railways—that the amount to be paid should be the commercial value of the undertaking ascertained from the average price of the shares for the seven, five, or three years preceding the purchase. Finally, the Local Authority were not to allow any new undertaker to come into their area when they had entered into an agreement with undertakers already there. Unless the work was badly carried out, or unreasonable charges were being made, he did not desire to invest the Electric Lighting Companies with any permanent monopolies; all that he asked was that they should be placed in no worse position than they were in when they first entered into their contracts. He hoped that the Bill would now be read a second time, that a great industry which had been kept back for six years, since the Act of 1882 was passed, would have room to exercise their capital. He knew, of his own knowledge, that if the law were made somewhat on the lines of this Bill, in the course of six or eight months large sums of money would be thrown into the country, and employment provided for large numbers of working men. He believed that thousands of men would speedily be employed in preparing these works and upon the business of electric lighting. In conclusion, he would only add that, in preparing this Bill, he had kept himself entirely free from any bias in favour of the Electric Companies, and he had endeavoured to take a fair view of what was due to the Local Authorities and the Gas Companies. He had, in fact, tried not to be a partizan one way or the other, and he trusted that this Bill, the second reading of which he begged to move, would meet with the approval of their Lordships as being fair and equitable.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." (*The Earl of Crawford.*)

LORD THURLOW said, while agreeing with much which had fallen from the noble Earl, he did not find himself in a position to withdraw his Bill on this subject. It was only some amelioration in the existing law which would set the large amount of capital ready for investment free. Ever since the Act of 1882 firms and companies of electric engineers and others interested in the subject had petitioned Parliament for such modifications in that Act as would remove those restrictions which, it was alleged, had the effect of crippling the progress of electric lighting, and in a Petition which was presented to their Lordships' House yesterday those gentlemen had expressed a view, which he shared, that a Bill so complex in its character as that of the noble Earl's had but a faint chance of finding acceptance, if not in this House, at any rate in the other House of Parliament. Having regard to the circumstances and the subject-matter, he had no hesitation in saying that the Petition embodying that view was signed by as representative and influential a body of names as could be brought together. The second reason why he was unable to withdraw his Bill in favour of that of the noble Earl was that it was too soon after the great Act of 1882 to revive the whole question. All that was wanted was a simple measure of relief to the Companies, giving them a larger measure of time in which to recoup themselves for their original outlay, so that they should not be compelled against their will to charge their clients a prohibitive price for the electricity which they supplied. A measure of such proportions as that of the noble Earl, dealing with public questions so complicated and important, ought, moreover, to be brought in on the advice of the Board of Trade, or some other Government Department, in order to do complete justice to all the interests at stake. His third objection was that it legislated on many points of detail which should be left to be dealt with by Provisional Order according to the merits and requirements of each case. Lastly, with regard to the Purchase Clauses, he objected to the Bill that it did not recognize the absolute right which the Local Authority should have, in his opinion, to become the purchaser on fair terms of the undertaking of a private company supplying electric light within the area of such authority at the expiry of the period for which the Provisional Order was originally granted.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, that the speech of the noble Marquess on the occasion of the second reading of his noble Friend's Bill would have shown that the Government were sincerely desirous to do what they could to promote the extension of electric lighting; and if it had been certain that the Bill now before their Lordships represented the feeling of those interested in promoting electric lighting in this country, it might have deserved a more attentive consideration. But, as had been just pointed out, a Petition had been laid upon the Table signed by a number of leading firms in the trade who would be most likely to apply to negotiate with the Local Authorities who said that they were satisfied with the Bill of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Thurlow). He might further say that since the Government consented to the second reading of the Bill of his noble Friend opposite there had been a very large number of applications to the Board of Trade in the hope that the extension of time from 21 to 42 years would have the effect of inducing capitalists to embark money in these undertakings. This Bill proposed to make an important change in the existing law. Hitherto Parliament had declined to allow Companies promoted, whether for purposes of electric lighting, gas supply, or tramways, to make their bargains for themselves, without the supervision and consent of Parliament. But this Bill proposed to abolish the Provisional Order altogether, and the noble Lord only proposed to do it in the case of the Electric Lighting, and no other, Companies. There were, he admitted, proposals in the Bill which were commendable. No doubt it would be a great advantage to secure, within a reasonable period, that those overhead wires which were a danger and disfigurement to the Metropolis should be laid underground. In the Bill of the noble Earl there was no provision for any penalty upon any Company which failed to carry out the removal of wires. Again, hitherto it had been a practice that the authority or individuals liable to repair certain streets within the area of the undertaking which were not repaired by the Local Authorities should be able to appear before the Board of Trade and state their objections to the proposals of the promoters, and those streets were then placed in a Schedule to the Order. As he understood the Bill of the noble Earl, those persons would not under it have the opportunity of appearing before any authority, and would have to submit their case to arbitration. The principle which Parliament had always enunciated was that no monopoly should be set up; they had had sufficient experience of the result of creating a monopoly in gas, water, and other matters. In this Bill it was stated that nobody should have any permanent monopoly; but from the word "permanent" he gathered that there would be a temporary monopoly—*i.e.*, while the order ran, and the noble Earl had omitted to state any time for the duration of the Order. With regard to the clause which proposed to give Local Authorities power to purchase, he thought that it would have been better to set about that in a more direct manner. As to the manner in which an undertaking was to be acquired by the Local Authority, Parliament had hitherto laid down the principle that the property which the undertakers sold at the expiration of the period granted should not contain any remuneration for the good-will of the concern. The noble Earl now proposed to apply the same principle to his Bill as was applied in the case of Indian railways and similar concerns—namely, that the price should be five years' of the marketable value previous to the notice to acquire the undertaking. It was possible that the Company which sold might be a public Company, with shares, the value of which was quoted on the Stock Exchange, and the price would be readily ascertained; but if it were a question of a private Company or an individual, there would be no such means of ascertaining the value. Again, there were many Companies which took up electric lighting as a part only of their business; in that case it would be obviously be difficult to separate the value of the electric light business from that of the other business. This Bill proposed to confer an entirely new power on the existing Local Authorities. It should be remembered that these authorities were undergoing a very great change, and it was very doubtful whether it would be wise to confer upon existing authorities powers such as these; in his opinion, the proposed County Councils might very reasonably be jealous of some of these powers being conferred upon the smaller authorities. It was impossible to discuss in Committee of the Whole House all the complicated and technical proposals of this Bill. Although it was true that many Committees had sat to consider this question of electric lighting, still they had not dealt with all the technical and difficult questions set out in this Bill. As he had said before, the Government were anxious to do all that they could to encourage the investment of capital in electric lighting, and although he had stated several grave objections to the Bill of the noble Earl, he did not wish to throw any discouragement in the way of the increase of electric lighting. He thought, therefore, it might be well that this Bill should be allowed to go to a second reading; and if their Lordships should be pleased so to do, he would suggest at a later stage that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, and that upon the Report of the Select Committee the next stage of the Bill should be taken.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he was glad to hear that the noble Earl who had just spoken did not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill now before them, because it involved questions of considerable interest and importance, and was, in fact, the proposal of an alternative scheme. However, if some alteration were made in it, it would not be inconsistent with the passing of the other Bill dealing with the subject, which had received its second reading. He would regret extremely, however, if this Bill were made a ground for postponing the progress of the Bill to which he had referred, because the Bill of the noble Earl no doubt raised very complicated questions which would need minute discussion and examination, and he was anxious lest the effect would be to hang up this question to an indefinite period and prevent any legislation on the subject passing at any early date. With regard to the Petitions which had been referred to, he believed that they were directed towards supporting the scheme which was already in progress rather than to opposing the Bill of the noble Earl. There was no doubt that the Act of 1882, with regard to the terms of purchase, needed amendment. It was not the case that whether the terms were onerous or not was a matter affecting only the promoters and the Local Authority; apart from the question of whether they could make the terms such as to induce capitalists to put money into electric lighting, he thought that the public had a distinct interest in seeing that the terms were not too onerous, as the undertakers would seek to recoup themselves by charging more than they otherwise need for the electric light. That meant that the present generation was to pay more than they otherwise need for the electric light in order that the next generation might get it for less than they ought. He hoped, therefore, that the measure of his noble Friend, which had already been read a second time, would be allowed to proceed. At the same time, he hoped that the Bill of the noble Earl would be read a second time. Owing to its complicated character, he thought there was little chance of its passing through the other House this Session.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 17*th April*, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—*First Report*—Army Estimates [No. 120].
Committee of Selection (Special Report).
Private Bill (*by Order*) — *Second Reading* — Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.), *put off.*
Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Queen Anne's Bounty* [211].
Second Reading—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Fourth Night*], *debate further adjourned;* Access to Mountains (Scotland) [103]; Liquor Traffic (Local Veto (Scotland) [106]; Fishing in Rivers [152]; Distress for Rent (Dublin) [159]; Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) [92], *negatived;* Steam Engines and Boilers [137], *put off;* Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2) [162], *put off;* Partnership [206], *debate adjourned.*
Committee—Report—Glebe Lands* [180].
Withdrawn—Architects' Registration [81].
Provisional Order Bills—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough)* [192]; Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray)* [193]; Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse)* [194].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (THEATRES, &c.) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) said, that in bringing forward this Bill on behalf of the Metropolitan Board of Works, he would remind the House that it was essentially a continuation measure of the powers already given to the Metropolitan Board. At the time those powers were granted they were tentative. They were powers granted in response to a Report brought up by a Committee of the House whose recommendations were embodied in the Bill of 1878. Those powers referred, in the first place, to existing theatres; and, in the second place, to theatres which had to be built. In both cases the powers which were granted were only with regard to one certificate, and left out entirely the question of supervision which was necessary whenever any alteration was made in a theatre. It had since come to the knowledge of the Metropolitan Board of Works, in carrying out the Act during the past nine years, that many theatres, which, in old times, had received a certificate from the Board, had been entirely altered, and altered in a manner which was not conducive to the public safety. The Bill, as it was now introduced by the Metropolitan Board, contained a provision that the Board should have power to enter the theatres, to examine them, and lay down such conditions as were necessary for the public safety. Those powers, however, could not be exercised arbitrarily, because there was a clause in the Bill providing arbitration wherever there was a difference between the proprietors of the theatre and the Metropolitan Board of Works. The opponents of the Bill had drawn up a manifesto which consisted of extracts from the report of a deputation to the Home Secretary last year, and the principal fault they found with the Board was that the powers now proposed to be conferred by the Bill had already been exceeded, and that requisitions had been made on the theatre proprietors which were not justified. Now that statement was absolutely false; because 98 per cent of the requisitions made upon the theatre and music-hall proprietors, both old and new, had been confirmed, and out of six appeals from theatre owners only 16 out of 93 requisitions made by the Board had been unconfirmed, while only 11 out of 105 requisitions made in regard to music halls were unconfirmed. One of the principal reasons why Parliament handed over to the Metropolitan Board the charge of theatres was to be found in the Report of a Committee which sat upon the subject, and it was because the Board had at its disposal a staff of officers who were accustomed to building, and because they had been made the authority for supervising the buildings erected in London. It was, therefore, thought that they were for those reasons the proper persons to have charge of the theatres as well. The present Bill could only be objected to by those theatre proprietors who had the intention of not carrying out their duty to the public by making alterations after they had received a certificate from the Board. He might refer to the Grand Theatre, which was burned down as lately as last December. On inquiry into that disaster, and on referring to the original plans under which the certificate of the Board was granted, it was found that a most serious alteration had been made after the certificate of the Board had been granted, and that a dwelling house had been constructed in the very centre of the theatre —namely, out of the smoking *foyer* in the front, and that bedrooms had been built over it as well. In the case of the Comedy Theatre two new houses had been added to the frontage of the theatre, and incorporated with it. In addition, they were built in an improper manner, without the walls which were necessary for preventing a fire from spreading from the stage to that part of the theatre set apart as the auditorium. He thought these were sufficient reasons why the Bill proposed by the Metropolitan Board should receive the assent of the House, and be referred to a Select Committee. One of the allegations of the opponents of the Bill was that during the nine years the Board had had charge of the theatres they had not overtaken the work they were called upon to do. As a matter of fact there had been, including old and new theatres, music halls, and places of entertainment, each covering an area of over 500 square feet, which was the minimum the Board could take action upon, a total of some 458 licensed upon inspection, in regard to which plans and elevations had been made by the Board. He thought that if the Metropolitan Board of Works were to be disestablished, as they were told, under another Bill now before the House, that still the Board would not be doing its duty if it were to relegate into futurity any provisions for the safety of the public which it felt necessary to carry out. As he understood from the newspapers that it was the intention of the Government to confide those duties to a future County Council, he would only say that he felt he should have done his duty in the interests of the safety of the public by pressing this Bill to a Division, so that those who declined either to bring in a Bill on the subject themselves, or to allow the Bill to go forward, should bear the blame of any catastrophe which might take place. He begged, therefore, to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Tatton Egerton.*)

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said, he rose for the purpose of moving the rejection of the Bill introduced by the Metropolitan Board of Works, and he did so on the ground that, quite irrespective of the question how long the Metropolitan Board of Works was to remain in existence, it was most improper to be entrusted with the charge of the safety of the public in our theatres. When the Board asked for further powers, it was desirable for the House to look back to the powers they already possessed. In 1878 the Board obtained the powers with regard to the Metropolitan theatres which had been referred to by his hon. Friend (Mr. Egerton), but for four years—and he had already called the attention of the House to the fact—down to 1881, the Board made no movement at all. It was not until after the question was brought prominently before the House that the Board began to stir, and at that time the Home Secretary, who was then the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), stated officially that the Board had ample powers and everything that was necessary in regard to the supervision and safety of theatres. That answer was repeated year after year by the Chairman of the Board, the late Member for the Hornsey Division of Middlesex. The Metropolitan Board now maintained that they had not had sufficient powers in the past. Certainly they had not done their duty, for after the lapse of nine years, during which they maintained that they had ample powers, they now came to the House of Commons declaring that their powers were inadequate, and asking for the extension of them. The persons who were interested in the theatres and music halls in the Metropolis comprised a very numerous body, and represented a capital of between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 in the Metropolis alone, besides directly giving employment to 150,000 people, independent of those who were indirectly employed. These gentlemen were altogether opposed to the action of the Metropolitan Board. They did not object to inspection. On the contrary, they invited it; but they objected to the way in which it was carried on by the Metropolitan Board. They were quite willing that the Home Secretary, or any authority he might appoint, should inspect their theatres and carry out whatever alteration might be considered right and safe in the interests of the public. But they wanted the system to be carried out on steady and consistent lines year after year, and not to be conducted in the arbitrary and whimsical manner which had been adopted under the Metropolitan Board, so that it could never be known what was required to be done. One year a Committee of the Metropolitan Board went round to inspect the theatres and give instructions that certain alterations should be made, and when those alterations had been made, perhaps at the cost of thousands of pounds to the lessees and managers, three years afterwards another Committee was appointed that went round the theatres and said that all that had been done was wrong, and required such and such other alterations to be made, the result being that the lessees never knew where they were, or what they had to do. Another question to which the proprietors of theatres objected was the loss of time involved. Owing to the red tape system of the Board, plans were lodged with them for many months without eliciting an answer. Lastly, it had been elicited by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) that the official appointed by the Board to look after these matters was the very official who was always applying to the theatrical managers for orders for admission, with an indication that unless he received boxes and orders, the work which the Board had power to do, and which was under his management, would be pressed forward. On all these grounds, he did not think that the Board was the proper authority to be entrusted with increased powers, and he, therefore, begged to move the rejection of the Bill.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he had much pleasure in seconding the Amendment. So far as the result of inquiry went, it was plain that the Metropolitan Board of Works had made a muddle and a mess of the inspection of the theatres of the Metropolis. Up to the present moment, a considerable amount of extra expense had been thrown upon the proprietors of theatres, and there was a possibility, if this Bill passed, that the rates of admission in some of the East End districts would be considerably increased. He also objected to any proposal for placing further powers in the hands of a moribund body like the Metropolitan Board of Works, who, no doubt, would muddle this matter as they had muddled many others.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Colonel HUGHES (Woolwich) said, that as that occasion seemed to be seized by some hon. Members as an opportunity of throwing stones at the Metropolitan Board of Works, and as that was the constant practice of some Members who were opposed to the Board, he thought it would be in better taste, seeing that the Board was to be put upon its trial, that no observations should be made on either side meanwhile to prejudice the case. He was one of those who believed that the opening inquiry would redound to the credit of the Metropolitan Board, and that those who had made allegations against it would find that they had been misinformed. However, the immediate question before the House was whether additional powers should be given to the Metropolitan Board, for the continuous inspection of theatres, so that the Board might know that the arrangements they had sanctioned were being faithfully carried out from year to year. The best answer to the objection which had been raised with regard to giving additional powers to the Board was this—that before the Bill came into operation, or, at any rate, its operation could be deferred, a new body would have been created, and therefore the objection was a very frivolous one, that the Board were not the proper persons to have the charge of the theatres, seeing that in the course of another 12 months the Council of the County of London would have all the powers of the Board transferred to them, and would then be the authority to be entrusted with the control of all matters of this kind. If the additional powers sought by the Metropolitan Board were vested in the Home Secretary the Board would be very glad indeed to get rid of a very troublesome part of their work; but he understood that that responsibility was declined by the right hon. Gentleman, who thought, and probably rightly thought, that it would be better to leave it to the proposed new authority which was to represent the County of London in the future. He asked the House to consider the matter from that point of view. The Metropolitan Board, on various grounds, were desirous of leaving the law affecting the Metropolis in such a state that their successors would have the greatest possible assistance from it in discharging their duty. Experience, however, had shown the Metropolitan Board that their present powers were not sufficient. He could only claim for the Metropolitan Board that there had been no serious disaster in the theatres since this jurisdiction had been given to them, and it was only for the purpose of making the jurisdiction more complete that the Bill had been introduced. When the proper time came the County Council would take over the duties of the Board, and he hoped that the unjust suspicion which seemed to prevail among certain persons as to the action of the Board would be removed. He begged to support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down had expounded the extraordinary doctrine that when the Metropolitan Board brought in a Bill for further powers, it was bad taste on the part of the House to consider the matter of public notoriety. The hon. and gallant Gentleman knew very well that not only was an investigation now going on with regard to the Metropolitan Board of Works, but that, to a great extent, that investigation was deemed necessary on account of their action in reference to Metropolitan theatres. The hon. and gallant Member said that in all probability the Board would disappear in the course of 12 months. If that were so, why did the Board waste the money of the ratepayers in bringing in a Bill which was only to be in operation for a year? He hoped the Home Secretary would meet the question by distinctly stating that the Government objected to the provisions of the Bill. It had been intimated that, under the powers already vested in the Metropolitan Board, the officers of that body were always running about for orders for the theatres, and it had been proved that the whole Metropolitan Board of Works was a greedy, cadging body.

Mr. TATTON EGERTON rose to Order. He asked if it was competent for the hon. Member to speak of a public body as a "greedy, cadging body?"

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he would withdraw the term, and say that the Board were the reverse. It was the habit of one Committee of the Board to visit the theatres and propose a series of alterations. Another Committee came in shortly afterwards, and altogether reversed the decision of their predecessors, requiring fresh alterations to be made. He would not say that the managers of theatres were ruined by this action, because they had a profitable business; but they were put to great annoyance and expense. He trusted that the matter would not be entrusted to the new County Council that was about to be called into existence. Instead of being the best authority, he was afraid that it would be almost as bad as the Metropolitan Board. He hoped the Home Secretary would have the courage to take over to the Home Office the power of looking into the condition of the theatres in regard to fires, and he believed that would be a change which would be satisfactory to the Metropolitan Members, and also to the public.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he looked upon the question purely from a public point of view. Prior to 1858, the duty of protecting the safety of the public visiting the theatres from the consequences of fire was vested practically in the Lord Chamberlain. Parliament in its wisdom passed an Act, in 1878, transferring the duty to the Metropolitan Board of Works; and, notwithstanding the attack made on the Metropolitan Board by the purist Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he (Mr. Webster) asserted that the Board had done its duty to the Metropolis and to the people who frequented the theatres honourably, faithfully, strictly, and well. If an inquiry were to take place, he believed that that would be found strictly true. The Bill now before the House simply gave the Board continuance powers. At the present time they had power to inspect theatres and see that they were so constructed as to give security to life against fire; but they had no power to go in from year to year, and see that the theatres were in the same condition as they had been left. It was in the power of the Board to go down to the theatres now and to see that the passages and exits were in proper order; but, after having given their certificate, they had no further power to assert that everything had been kept in the same condition. That was an improper state of affairs, and ought not to be continued. All the Metropolitan Board asked was to have more continuance powers, so that they might, from time to time, inspect the theatres in the interest of the public. It was stated that the Metropolitan Board would cease to exist. It might, or it might not. In all probability it would; but the new County Council would have so many duties to discharge that it would have no time to go into the question of the protection of life in the theatres from fire. Therefore, the Metropolitan Board desired to place in the hands of the new Council the best Act of Parliament they could, and he could not believe that the House of Commons would say that it was undesirable to protect the public safety, either in the theatres of the Metropolis or elsewhere. The hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex (Mr. Dixon-Hartland), who moved the rejection of the Bill, and who appeared to have taken charge of all questions relating either to the rating of Londoners, or any matter in which Londoners were primarily interested, either in the administration of their local concerns or the protection of their lives and properties from the ravages of fire, presumed to know more about these questions than the Metropolitan Board and all the other authorities in London. Perhaps the hon. Member might not be aware that Petitions had come to the Metropolitan Board in favour of the Bill from various Local Boards in the Metropolis.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he desired to say a few words on the Bill. He could not help regarding it as somewhat unnecessary under the circumstances. It was introduced on behalf of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but they did not know whether the proposals in the Local Government Bill with regard to London would be adopted or not. If they were, the existing powers of the Metropolitan Board would be transferred to the new Council. The hon. Member who spoke last (Mr. R. G. Webster) had a little under-stated the existing powers of the Board. He did not say that those powers were sufficient for the protection of theatres—probably they were not—but they were more extensive than the powers in the hands of any authority in the Provinces. The Act of 1878 gave the Metropolitan Board power to point out what works ought to be carried out in the structure of new theatres, and also to point out, within reasonable limits, what alteration should be made in old theatres. But the Board had also power, under the Act of 1882, to see that doors and exits were properly constructed. The greater theatres were in a much better condition as to safety and protection than theatres elsewhere; and whatever urgency there was in the matter with regard to the Metropolis, there was more urgency with reference to the Provinces. As had been pointed out, the Local Government Bill proposed to transfer the powers of the Metropolitan Board to the new Council of the County of London. Perhaps, under the circumstances, the best course would be to wait and see how the Local Government Bill went on; but it might not be impossible before the Bill left the House to introduce clauses in that part of it which related to the new Council of the County of London in regard to the inspection of theatres. But, be that as it might, the present moment seemed to him to be inopportune for giving further powers to what he might call a moribund body, which would probably never have an opportunity of putting those powers into force.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 18; Noes 144: Majority 126.—(Div. List, No. 71.)

Words *added*.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—NEWPORT COUNTY COURT — INSUFFICIENT AND DEFECTIVE ACCOMMODATION.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to the statements contained in a Memorial sent to the Judge of the County Court at Newport, Monmouthshire, by the barristers practising there and 70 Solicitors, as to the insufficient and defective accommodation provided for the sittings of the Court, and for the offices; and, what steps he will take to provide a proper Court and offices?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): My attention has, from time to time, been called to the insufficient accommodation afforded in the County Court referred to, which is held on a lease expiring at Christmas, 1889. With the view of meeting the difficulty temporarily, it was arranged in January, 1886, that the sittings of the Court should be transferred to the new Town Hall, which had then just been completed, and to the use of which, and also of the building erected and used by the County Justices, the Government were entitled for County Court purposes under the provisions of the Act 13 & 14 *Vict.*, c. 61, s. 24. Ample accommodation is afforded in these buildings for all the County Court business, but the transfer has never been carried out; because the Local Authorities appear to have been unable to make arrangements for the occupation of the Town Hall on two consecutive days in those weeks in which the County Court sits. Such arrangements are found possible in other towns where the County Court business is larger than at Newport; and I have recently informed the Memorialists, who have prayed for improved accommodation, that I must look to the Local Authorities to afford every possible facility to the Government in making arrangements which are primarily for the benefit of the town without entailing unnecessary expenditure on National Funds.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—APPLECROSS BAY.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the placing of numerous posts, with iron hooks attached, by Lord Middleton, in Applecross Bay, was in accordance with 29 *Geo.* II., c. 22, s. 1, which, *inter alia*, enacts that—

> "If any person or persons whatsoever shall obstruct or hinder any person or persons from fishing in moonlight nights, or at any other time whatsoever, in all or any or in any part of the said seas, &c., such person shall for every such offence respectively forfeit the sum of £100 sterling;"

whether it is his intention to prosecute Lord Middleton for the above penalties; and, whether he is aware that, since attention has been drawn to the subject, Lord Middleton has begun to remove the obstruction referred to therein?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh, and St. Andrew's Universities): I cannot give any answer as to the legality or illegality of acts done upon a bare statement in a Question, and without knowledge of the particulars. I have already informed the hon. Member that no persons have fished, or attempted to fish, in the place referred to, and it follows that no person has been obstructed or hindered. I answer the last paragraph in the negative.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked, whether the Lord Advocate would cause inquiry to be made to ascertain whether the facts were as stated in the Question?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The Act to which my hon. Friend refers is an Act to prohibit any person from obstructing or hindering a person from fishing. I have stated that, as a matter of fact, no person has been obstructed or hindered; and therefore I do not see any cause for an inquiry.

BURMAH — DISARMAMENT OF THE BURMESE.

Mr. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the statement of the Burmah correspondent of *The Times*, on the 9th instant, that the recent policy of disarming the Burmese population has been a lamentable mistake; whether the policy is being still pursued; and whether any papers will be laid upon the Table of the House in reference to the subject, and the grounds on which it was adopted?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The Secretary of State for India has seen the statements alluded to in the Question. The official documents received from India do not, however, bear out the description of the policy of disarmament and its results given by *The Times* correspondent. The Secretary of State has no reason to think that the action of the Chief Commissioner has been mistaken, or to interfere with its continuance. The Secretary of State does not see any present necessity for laying Papers on the subject before the House; but I shall be glad to show them to the hon. Member.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY A POLICE CONSTABLE AT PORTUMNA.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on Tuesday, 3rd April, 1888, Constable Courteney (or Coatenay), of Ballyshrule Barrack, near Portumna, killed, or caused the death of, a cow belonging to Andrew Keane, of Ballyglass; whether the constable was found in the cowshed with the dying cow; whether he paid the owner £6 as compensation and hush-money on Thursday 5th April; whether at places where this constable has been on "protection duty" a sheep and a horse have died mysteriously by violence; and, whether, on the unsupported evidence of this constable, six young men in the district of Portumna were recently imprisoned for alleged intimidation, while two others only escaped punishment by establishing an *alibi*, though he had sworn positively against them also? He wished also to add to the Question a paragraph which had been struck out after he had handed it in. It was, whether if this Constable Courteney had not been caught redhanded causing the death of the cow, this death of the cow would have appeared as an agragrian outrage?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The latter part of the Question was struk out by myself as being irregular.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I will content myself with dealing with the Question on the Paper. The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that the constable referred to, in a state of drunkenness, entered the cowhouse and lay down. The owner subsequently entered and charged the constable with killing a cow which was lying dead there. The constable thereupon offered him £6 compensation, and subsequently paid it to him. The district inspector, however, reports that the sergeant in charge of the station inspected some 36 hours afterwards the carcase of the cow, and found it in a state of decomposition, and from its condition considered it could not have been killed by the constable as alleged, and the general impression among the people in the district carries out this view. There does not appear to be any ground for the allegation that while the constable was on protection duty in other places a horse and a sheep died mysteriously by violence. As regards the last paragraph, six men were convicted, not on the unsupported evidence of the constable, but on the testimony of four constables, this man being one. In the case of one only of the two men who were acquitted did this constable give evidence.

Mr. H. J. WILSON: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the sergeant reports that the appearance of the cow when it was only one day dead precluded the idea that it had been killed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: So I understand?

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—RETURNS.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will grant the Returns asked for by the hon. Member for North Meath (Mr. Mahony), one relating to Judicial Rents in Ireland and the other to the population of Poor Law Electoral Divisions?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Departments concerned report that it would not be practicable to furnish the Returns referred to without a serious interruption of their public business. I therefore regret I cannot undertake to consent to their being called for.

THE TRUCK LAW—THE RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether breaches of the Truck Law by the Rhymney Iron Company have, during the past two months, been reported to the local Factory Inspector and to the Government, and what action has been, or will be, taken therein; whether the Rhymney Company has been several times prosecuted for similar offences, and on what occasions; and, whether the same Company was specially reported against by the Commission on Truck 20 years since?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; complaints have been made, and are now the subject of inquiry. I am not prepared to say at present whether it will be possible to procure legal evidence, or what action will be taken. The Rhymney Iron Company have been twice prosecuted for offences under the Truck Act, in 1885 and 1886. An account of the proceedings of this Company is appended to the Report of the Royal Commission on Truck of 1871.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—HOLYHEAD HARBOUR—THE PLATTERS ROCKS.

Mr. LEWIS (Anglesey) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the facts contained in the Memorial presented to the Board of Trade by the Holyhead Local Board in July last, showing the great necessity, in the interest of shipping generally, as well as for the safety of the Holyhead steamers, that the Platters Rocks in the harbour be removed, are correct; whether the Government received a Memorial from the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool, in support of the above-mentioned Memorial, stating that they had consulted the principal Shipping and Underwriting Associations of that port, and found that they all agree that the removal of the rocks in question would be greatly increasing the harbour of refuge accommodation, and prevent the loss of many lives and much valuable property; whether the Government received a similar Memorial from the Committee of Lloyd's, as well as from several other influential Bodies, to the same effect; and, whether the Government, if not prepared to have the rocks removed, intend to have one of the other two schemes, that have been for years under the consideration of the Government, carried out — namely, either to build over the Platters, leaving entrance on each side to the inner harbour, or to run a pier from the Salt Island on the rocks?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have received the various Memorials referred to by the hon. Member on the subject of the removal of the Platters Rocks; but I am not prepared, within the limits of a reply, to express an opinion on all the statements which have been made therein. Neither of the schemes referred to by the hon. Member in the last paragraph of his Question has for some years been under the consideration of the Board of Trade; but they appear to have been suggested under different circumstances before part of the present breakwater was made.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION BILL—LEGISLATION.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, When he proposes to introduce the Technical Instruction Bill?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): I hope to introduce the Technical Instruction Bill so soon as substantial progress has been made with the Local Government Bill.

ARMY — HARWICH HARBOUR—CLOSING ENTRANCE DURING RIFLE PRACTICE ON LANDGUARD COMMON.

Colonel ANSTRUTHER (Suffolk, Woodbridge) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the War Office intend closing the entrance to Harwich Harbour during rifle practice on Landguard Common; and, whether such a step is taken with the consent and advice of the Board of Trade and of the Harwich Harbour Conservancy Board?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No, Sir; I understand that there is no such intention.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has authorized the War Office to close the deep water channel into Harwich Harbour?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade, after holding a local inquiry, gave, on the 29th of October last, the consent required by the Artillery and Rifle Ranges Act, 1885, to the bye-laws which the Secretary of State for War had made. The bye-laws will not prevent vessels entering and leaving Harwich Harbour passing through the range, as they provide that firing is to cease during the passage of vessels.

SCOTLAND—THE IMPRISONED TIREE CROFTERS.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the three imprisoned Tiree crofters were persuaded by the Edinburgh Prison authorities to sign a document acknowledging the illegality of their actions, and promising, if the Lord Advocate would recommend a commutation of their sentence, to go home at once to Tiree, and not to attend any public meetings in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, or elsewhere, nor to encourage in any way those who attack the administration of the Law; and, whether the said document was explained to them, before they appended their signatures, in their own language—Gaelic.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I do not believe that the Prison Authorities interfered in this matter at all, and I never had any communication with them on the subject. A gentleman connected with benevolent Societies in Glasgow came to Edinburgh and visited the prisoners; and then wrote to me as the result of what he described as a "long and interesting conversation," that they asked him "strongly to say on their behalf" that—

> "If they are let out of prison now, and allowed to go home in peace, that they will always prove themselves the most law-abiding and very best friends of law and order in Tiree."

This was the very first communication received on the subject. I directed a reply to be sent, in which it was stated that—

> "The Lord Advocate was not prepared to take any step that may tend to alter the course of law, if, as on a former occasion, those who have broken it are to be received and *fêted* as innocent persons on the Royal prerogative of mercy being extended to them."

I received a reply from the same gentleman—a document written in his handwriting, and signed by the prisoners, containing, *inter alia*, the statements referred to in the Question. The gentleman in the covering letter stated that the paper had been drawn by himself, and "carefully considered" by the prisoners. A letter to him from the prisoners' solicitor was also enclosed, indicating that they were in communication on the subject.

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS' COMMISSION—SITTING AT GAIRLOCH.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, If it is true, as reported in *The Scottish Highlander* of this week, that the first cases to be heard at the opening of the Land Court at Gairloch, on Monday morning next, refer to crofters resident at a distance of 16 to 18 miles from the place where the Court is to be held; and, if so, whether some arrangement could be made by which cases near the Court were taken at the beginning of the sitting, so that reasonable facilities might be given to people who have to travel such long distances to put in an appearance later on in the day?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, the greatest distance crofters had to come for the Court yesterday was eight miles—six by road, and two by boat—not 16 or 18, as stated by *The Scottish Highlander*. All those cited appeared in good time, made no complaint of inconvenience, gave their evidence, and were free to return home before 4 o'clock, and would reach home long before darkness set in.

PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION OF LONDON (LIMITED).

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that a Company, calling itself the Provident Association of London (Limited), carrying on business which has been described by the Managing Director as that of both an Insurance Association and a Building Society, offers to the representatives of deceased members, beneficial advantages to which living members are not entitled, under the Rules of the Association; whether a Company carrying on business of this nature is required, under the provisions of "The Insurance Companies Act, 1870," to deposit with the Accountant General the sum of £20,000; and, whether this Company has complied with this provision of the Statute?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I am informed that the Memorandum and Articles of the Company referred to by the hon. Member were first produced at the Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies on the 29th of April, 1884; but were referred back for the Objects Clause to be so amended as to make it quite clear that life insurance was not included. This was done, the words added to the Memorandum being—

> "Provided that nothing herein contained shall authorize the Company to grant annuities or assurance on human life."

With this amendment the registration was allowed without the deposit of the £20,000 being made. I further understand that, since the date of registration, nothing is known of the Company, except that the Registrar has received regularly the Annual Returns, and has filed a copy of one immaterial Special Resolution. If any facts are brought under the notice of the Board of Trade, showing that the business of life assurance is being carried on by the Company, I will direct that further inquiry be made as regards the position of the Company under the Act referred to.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW DRAINAGE WORKS.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the plans proposed by the Government Engineer for the Barrow Drainage Works have now been condemned as unsuitable, and if, in consequence, the Bill to enable the project to be carried out, for which Parliamentary Notices were published last November, will have to be abandoned; what were the superior qualifications of the engineer and his principal assistants, who have been employed on the Barrow and Shannon Drainage Schemes, which made their appointments necessary or desirable, to the exclusion of engineers resident in Ireland, who had for many years made a special study of the improvement of those Rivers; and, what do the Government now propose with regard to the carrying out of those important National works?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension as to the plan that has been prepared for dealing with the matter. It will be brought before the House as soon as the condition of Public Business admits of it. As regards the officers employed, the chief engineer is an Irishman by descent, and was selected for the special experience acquired by him when engaged on extensive hydraulic works in South Africa. All his engineering assistants are Irishmen, who were selected with a due regard to their qualifications.

PRISON REGULATIONS (IRELAND) —RULE 24.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Prison Rules provide (Rule 24) that—

> "During the whole of his sentence, when it does not exceed one month, and during one month of his sentence when it exceeds one month, a convicted criminal prisoner shall have to lie on a plank bed;"

but that by industry and good conduct he may—

> "Earn a gradual remission of this requirement after the expiration of one month;"

whether it is the invariable practice in Ireland to require that the first month of any term of imprisonment shall be spent on the plank bed; whether this practice deprives the prisoner of the possibility of earning any remission of the plank bed punishment which the Rule contemplates; whether, in case of imprisonment for longer terms than one month, the plank bed requirement will be postponed till after the first month to give the prisoner an opportunity of earning the remission provided by the Rule; whether a man named Corny, lately discharged from Kilmainham Prison, spent three months on the plank bed during a single imprisonment; whether it is a common practice in Irish prisons to punish with longer terms of plank bed than one month; and, whether there is any Law or Rule for such punishments; and, if not, will they be put a stop to? He called the attention of the Chief Secretary specially to paragraph 5 of the Question.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The reply to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. The practice does deprive the prisoner from earning any remission during the first month; no such remission, however, is contemplated in the Rule. The Prisons Board have no power to adopt the course suggested in the 4th paragraph. A prisoner named Corny spent some 74 nights on the plank bed; but this was due to his misconduct. In Ireland the plank bed is only continued beyond a month in cases of misconduct; whereas in England, under a similar Rule, the plank bed, as a general practice, is continued beyond a month until remission is earned by industry and good conduct.

Mr. MURPHY: Have the Irish Prisons Board power to order the plank bed beyond the first month? Is not their power restricted to putting a prisoner on bread and water?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I understand they have power to order the plank bed.

PRISON REGULATIONS (IRELAND) —RULE 105.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Prison Regulations (Rule 105) provide that the surgeon may, in case of danger or difficulty, call in medical assistance; whether there is anything in the Rules to limit the discretion of the surgeon in selecting the medical assistance he will call in; whether a Circular has been sent from the Irish Prisons Board to Governors of gaols, requiring them to submit a list of names of medical practitioners whom they may consider suitable in their districts for the purpose of being called in consultation; and, whether the Prisons Board are justified in attempting to fetter the discretion of the prison surgeons in this matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Rule is as stated, and a Circular has been issued as mentioned. The appointment of Medical Officers of Prisons requires the sanction of the authorities; and it seems to me to be certainly within the spirit of the Rules that some effective control should be exercised as to the selection of consulting physicians.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ENCROACHMENTS ON WASTE AND COMMON LANDS.

Mr. ARTHUR WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will insert in the Local Government Bill provisions for giving to the District Councils power, by summary proceedings before Justices, to prevent encroachments on waste and common lands?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): There is nothing in the Local Government Bill which will interfere with powers of the nature of those referred to being conferred hereafter upon District Councils; but, for the reasons which I have more than once mentioned in the House, the Government are unwilling to insert provisions in the Bill for an amendment of the law, however desirable the amendment may be, which are not essential for the purposes of the Bill.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION SITTINGS IN CO. TYRONE.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Tyrone Sub-Commission, announced to commence its sittings on the 1st of May next, will be confined to the hearing of fair rent applications from the Unions of Omagh, Castlederg, Strabane, Gortin, Irvinestown, and Enniskillen; whether the entire Division of South Tyrone, embracing the baronies of Middle and Lower Dungannon, and Closher, will be excluded by this arrangement; and, when cases from this large agricultural district are likely to be heard?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the sitting of the Sub-Commission in County Tyrone, which will commence on the 1st of May, will be confined to cases from the Unions named in the first part of the Question. The Sub-Commission will take up cases from the other Unions of the county in June next.

STATE OF IRELAND—REFUSING TO SELL BREAD TO EMERGENCY MEN.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) (for Mr. J. O'Connor) (Tipperary, S.) asked the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Michael Russell, Thomas Connors, and Miss Connors, were in January this year convicted of conspiracy for refusing to sell bread to Emergency men, and sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment;

whether, on appeal to the County Court, Judge Wall agreed to state a case for a Superior Court, and afterwards refused to state it; whether warrants for the arrest of the accused were issued on the 1st of February; whether they were not arrested until the 15th of March, when the Superior Courts had closed their sittings, and when it was then impossible for the prisoners' solicitor to apply for writ of *habeas corpus*, as he had announced his intention of doing on the refusal of the County Court Judge to state a case; and, whether he will state the cause of the delay in executing the warrant?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the Question of the hon. Member. Michael Russell, Thomas Connors, and Jane Connors were convicted and sentenced for conspiring to refuse to sell, as stated in the Question. They appealed; and the County Court Judge affirmed the sentences on Russell and Thomas Connors, and allowed the case against Jane Connors to stand over to next Quarter Sessions. The County Court Judge, on being asked to state a case, said he would look into the matter and see if he had power to do so. He did subsequently refuse to state a case. The announcement of the County Court Judge's decision was not made known until some days after the 1st of February. The issue of the warrants was then referred to the Resident Magistrates, who originally tried the case, and when they were signed their execution was carried out as soon as practicable. The Divisional Magistrate states that the prisoners' solicitor did not announce his intention of applying for a writ of *habeas corpus.* The prisoners' case, however, was in no way prejudiced; inasmuch as although the regular sittings of the Courts had terminated, a vacation Judge has always been accessible, who would have full jurisdiction to hear such an application.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ROBBERY AT THE CHARTERHOUSE STREET POST OFFICE.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If any investigation has taken place as to the robbery at the Charterhouse Street Post Office; and, how the police, when a hole existed in the shutters and the gas was alight, could have allowed a large safe to be removed and a meal enjoyed in the office?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Commissioner of Police as to this robbery; and he informs me that there is no shutter at this Post Office, but a boarding so high that only a tall man can see over it, and there is no hole in it. The safe was removed by the thieves from the front office into the back, and the meal was enjoyed not in view of the street, but down in the basement. My hon. Friend must bear in mind that it is impossible for a constable on his beat to keep observation on one house; but the practice of keeping gas alight and having holes in the shutters is of great aid to the police.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF MAIN ROADS.

Mr. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the fact that under Clause 15, section 2, of the Local Government Bill, a County District retaining under its own care the maintenance and repair of main roads within the district, will only be entitled to receive from the County Council one-half the cost of such maintenance and repair under "The Highways and Locomotive Act, 1878," and will lose the present grant in aid from the Exchequer; and, whether, inasmuch as such an enactment will tend to throw the maintenance and repair of main roads entirely on County Councils, and discourage that local, and in great part voluntary, superintendence which is so essential to efficient work and economical expenditure, he will so amend Clause 15, that a County District wishing to retain the charge of its own main roads shall not be in a worse financial position than are the present Local Authorities in similar circumstances?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, the contributions from County Councils would be based, not on one-half the expenditure, but on the total expenditure on account of the maintenance of county roads,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — LICENSING DIVISIONS.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will have any objection to reduce the numbers stated in Clause 10, section 2, of the Local Government Bill from 50,000 to 45,000 as regards the boroughs or urban districts to be constituted by the County Councils as separate Licensing Divisions, in order that the nine boroughs specially affected in that respect may not be excluded; and, whether he will take into special consideration the question of boroughs—such as Great Yarmouth, Wigan, Hastings, and Barrow—which were in 1881 under 50,000, but are now about 50,000 or above it, and will recognize the unfairness of tacking on neighbouring villages to such boroughs to form Licensing Districts?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am afraid I can only say that if, when the clause referred to in the Local Government Bill is reached in Committee, an Amendment is moved to the effect of that suggested, the Government will be prepared to give the proposal their consideration.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can see his way to relieve the fishing industry, which is at the present time in distress, as well as the agricultural interest, of the proposed Wheel Tax, the fishing carts being in most cases necessarily, owing to the rough nature of their work, over 10 cwt., and a very large number of extra carts being only employed for a small portion of the year in the height of the fishing season for rapid loading and unloading?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he could not undertake to relieve the fishing industry from the Wheel Tax. No person would be obliged to pay the tax for more vehicles than he possessed horses. The weight of the carts would be a matter for consideration.

PARKS (METROPOLIS) — ST. JAMES'S PARK.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether it is with his sanction that grass is being laid down along portions of the side of the Lake in St. James's Park, and railings are being erected, whereby children are debarred from their accustomed access to the water; and, whether it is intended to extend this process so as entirely to exclude for the future children from having access to the Lake?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University), in reply, said, it was true that grass was being substituted for the unsightly flints which lined a portion of the Lake, and that railings were being put up to protect the grass whilst it was growing. So far as the railings had the effect of keeping the children away from what the hon. Member termed their "accustomed access to the water," he thought it would be a good thing, as he did not know what they wanted to have access to the water for, except to fall in.

Mr. S. SMITH pointed out that children were in the habit of sailing boats in the Lake.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he believed that the railings would not go all round the water.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF MAIN ROADS.

Mr. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in the case of an Urban Authority which claims to retain the powers and duties of maintaining and repairing a main road within the district of such Authority, will the County Council contribute the full annual amount, based on the average of three years' expenditure on the road previous to the passing of the Act, or only pay the amount now contributed under the Highways Amendment Act of 1878, which is only one-half?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The contribution of the County Council in the case referred to will be based not on one-half of the expenditure in respect of the maintenance of the road prior to the passing of the Act, but on the total expenditure on account of the maintenance of the road.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — POSTAL ACCOMMODATION AT CARLOW.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, What is the reason of the delay in providing better accommodation for the post office business at Carlow; whether representations have been made by the Town Commissioners and traders of the town to the effect that the present post office building is wholly unsuited to the requirements of the district; and, whether those representations have been admitted by the Inspector of the Post Office; and, if so, when steps will be taken to provide increased accommodation?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, the Postmaster General, who was on a Committee, had asked him to answer the Question. It was true that representations had been rereceived from Carlow as to the need of better accommodation for the post office business in that town. It had not been possible as yet to complete inquiries; but no time would be lost in doing so, and in coming to a decision on the subject.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it has not already taken about a year to get to the present state of the negotiations; and whether it always takes a year to complete the purchase of a site?

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was not in a position to admit that.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—THE MEDICAL STAFF CORPS.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the new General Order restricting the enlistment of men for the Medical Staff Corps to three years Army and nine years Reserve service has been considered or approved of by the Director General; and, whether he has considered that the result of the new Regulations may be, that the men of the Corps will scarcely have become skilled in their nursing duties as orderlies when they will be removed and replaced by raw, unskilled men?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Every Army Order is issued on the responsibility of the Secretary of State, after consultation with his professional advisers. The importance of having a large reserve of trained men of the Medical Staff Corps available in war time is so great that the disadvantage of a somewhat curtailed training must be faced.

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS' COMMISSION—REDUCTION OF RENTS.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he has seen the statement in *The Scottish Leader* of 13th April, that the Crofters' Commission has reduced the rents of Lord Lovat's crofters from £995 to £689, although Lord Lovat reduced the same rents about 18 months ago from £1,202 to £995; and, whether the statement is accurate?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I have not seen the statement, and have not as yet any official Report to enable me to say whether it is accurate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE GRANT FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE INDOOR POOR.

Sir TINDAL ROBERTSON (Brighton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under the provisions of the Local Government Bill, the proposed grant of 4*d.* per head per day towards the maintenance of the indoor poor will be a permanent yearly grant, or whether the grant will be distributed by the Board for one year only after the election of the County Councils, and will then be discontinued; and, whether, under the Bill, the grants in aid with respect to lunatics in asylums and the salaries of parochial medical officers and teachers in workhouse schools will be withdrawn?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Bill contemplates that the payment at the rate of 4*d.* per head per day in respect of the maintenance of indoor paupers shall be paid annually, and not only during the first year after the constitution of the County Councils. The grants which have hitherto been paid by the Government in respect of pauper lunatics in asylums, and salaries of Poor Law medical officers and teachers in Poor Law schools, will, under the Bill, be paid by the County Councils out of the funds raised by the Licence Duties in their counties.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked, whether the County Council would have the power to raise or lower this payment in respect of the maintenance of indoor paupers?

Mr. RITCHIE: No, Sir.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — REMOVAL OF DR. C. RONAYNE, OF YOUGHAL, FROM THE COMMISSION OF THE PEACE.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statement in the public prints—namely, that Dr. Charles Ronayne, of Youghal, has been removed from the Commission of the Peace, is true; and, if so, whether he would state the grounds on which the Lord Chancellor has acted in this matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I understand it is the case that the Gentleman referred to has been removed from the Commission of the Peace. The grounds on which the Lord Chancellor acted seem to be fully set forth in the correspondence which I observe has appeared in the Daily Press.

Mr. CLANCY: I must ask the right hon. Gentleman to be courteous enough to state the grounds upon which the removal was effected.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the hon. Gentleman must be aware that the matter did not rest with him, but with the Lord Chancellor. He would, however, if the hon. Gentleman desired, ask the Lord Chancellor if there was anything to add, or which could be added?

Mr. CLANCY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Dr. Ronayne was not removed from the Commission of the Peace simply for issuing a proclamation enjoining the preservation of the peace at a public meeting?

[No reply.]

INLAND REVENUE — AMOUNT RECEIVED FOR LICENCES FOR THE SALE OF SPIRITS, &c.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What amount was received in the Metropolis during the last financial year for licences for the sale of spirits, wine, and beer; and, what amount was received for establishment licences?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said, the information that could be furnished at present would be imperfect; and it would be better for the right hon. Gentleman to wait until more accurate figures could be furnished.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: I think it would be well that we should have information upon these points as soon as possible. I wish now to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether having regard to the general desire for the fullest information as to the financial aspect of his proposal, he will lay upon the Table a Return showing the amounts paid for existing licences and the taxation proposed to be transferred to each county; secondly, the amounts of the Treasury grants paid to each county; thirdly, the proportion of the Probate Duty which it is estimated each county will receive on the basis of its indoor pauperism; fourthly, the estimated amount expended in respect of main roads; and, fifthly, the general county expenditure to which the whole county will be assessable. If the right hon. Gentleman will give the information it will save time and be of great service.

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) asked the right hon. Gentleman to place Notice of the Questions upon the Paper.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

Mr. NORTON (Kent, Tunbridge) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can give the House any further information with regard to the formation of the new Department of Agriculture?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): A Bill to create the new Department is in draft, and is receiving the careful consideration of the Government. I hope it will be in our power to introduce it very shortly.

LAND IMPROVEMENTS (IRELAND).

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the promotion of drainage schemes and kindred land improvements under existing legislation is almost at a standstill in Ireland in consequence of the Report of the Royal Commission for Public Works, and the expectation that fresh legislation on this subject will be introduced by the Government; and, whether there is any intention on the part of the Government to proceed with legislation in this direction in the present Session, or at all; and, if not, will an authoritative announcement to that effect be given to put an end to the present state of uncertainty?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am not aware that the promotion of drainage schemes and kindred land improvements is at a standstill in Ireland at the present moment. The subject has not been brought under my notice. One of the Bills in question, as a result of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, is now practically ready; but the hon. Gentleman is aware that there are other Irish measures before the House; and the Government do not think it right to introduce these Drainage Bills until some progress has been made with other Irish legislation, and there is a reasonable prospect of our being able to carry these Bills through the House without unnecessary delay.

MR. MURPHY: Am I to understand that there is some prospect of carrying measures of this kind this Session?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We certainly hope and intend to do so.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—GRIEVANCES OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government are prepared to furnish means to the Administration in Ireland to deal with the grievances of the National school teachers?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government are not prepared to ask Parliament for increased Votes for the remuneration of Irish National school teachers. Any increase should come from local and not from Imperial sources.

LIMITED LIABILITY LAW AMENDMENT—LEGISLATION.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can now state when the Bill of the Government for the Amendment of the Law of Limited Liability will be introduced in the House of Lords?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It is not possible to state any particular date; it will be introduced as soon as possible.

PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—BREAKWATER AT MUTTON ISLAND, CO. GALWAY—EMPLOYMENT OF CONVICTS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government intend to take early steps to locate convicts at Galway for the purpose of connecting Mutton Island with the main land, as recommended by the Committee of which Lord Cross was a member?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The proposal to construct a breakwater from Mutton Island was considered by the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, and they reported that the large expenditure of public money which such a scheme would involve should be postponed in favour of the many more urgent demands upon the public purse which exist. Under these circumstances, the Government are not prepared to take any early steps in the matter.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES)—LEGISLATION.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How he intends to carry out his promise of furthering a Bill for the Promotion of Intermediate Education in Wales during the present Session?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): By the introduction of a Bill at a later period should opportunity be afforded.

MR. KENYON: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the action taken by one of his Colleagues last night in opposing the second reading of a Bill dealing with the subject was in furtherance of his pledge to legislate on it?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he thought the course to which the hon. Member referred was consistent with the duty which the Government owed to the House. The Bills involved questions of such great importance that they ought not to be passed without a debate on the second reading.

Mr. KENYON: Am I to understand——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) inquired when the Van and Wheel Tax Bill would be in the hands of hon. Members, and when the second reading would be taken?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he was not prepared to state the day when the second reading of the Bill would be taken, for that would depend on the progress of the Local Government Bill, with which it was connected. The hon. Member knew that it could not be taken at the same time as the Budget, as it was a proposal for the future relief of rates, and not a matter of Imperial finance. He hoped that the Bill would be in the hands of Members in two or three days; but he had purposely delayed it in order to consider many of the modifications in the tax that had been suggested by hon. Members.

GERMANY—HEALTH OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY.

Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice, Whether he can relieve the general anxiety by giving a more recent and more favourable report of the condition of the health of the German Emperor than that which appeared in the newspapers of this morning?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): I have seen a telegram sent on authority from Berlin to-day, which states that the Emperor passed a somewhat better night; but there is no doubt that his Majesty's condition gives ground for grave anxiety, and commands deep sympathy with his family and people.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether his attention has been directed to the following extract from a statement made by an untried prisoner in Galway Gaol:—

"I was driven the whole distance from Loughrea to Galway, 18 miles, and arrived at the gaol about 8 o'clock on Saturday night. On my arrival I delivered up everything that I thought they would want to take from me, including a crucifix and medal joined together by a chain. I was ushered into a small cell, seven feet by five, was stripped naked by two warders and searched. They found a medal of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, and an *Agnus Dei* in my waistcoat pocket, which they were about to take away from me; but I remonstrated with them, and asked them did not they know what they represented? The Governor, who was present at the time, said he did not know what they were; but ordered them to be handed back to me. The Governor then left. I then proceeded to put on my clothes, and found that my suspenders had been taken away from me. My frieze overcoat had also been taken from outside the cell. I asked for the coat, and was told that I could not get it. I then rushed outside for the coat, and succeeded in getting hold of it, and was in the act of putting it on, and had my arms partly into the sleeves, when I was seized violently by both warders. However, I succeeded in getting my arms into the coat——"

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know what private Notice the hon. Member has given to the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but it is obviously impossible that he can answer a detailed Question of this kind without full Notice; and, therefore, the hon. Member had better put it upon the Paper in the ordinary way.

Mr. CLANCY: Very well, Mr. Speaker. I will then ask, whether the attention of the Chief Secretary has been directed to this subject, and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the truth of the allegations; whether, if he finds them to be true, he will take suitable action to punish the authors of such illegalities, and prevent their recurrence in future; and, whether he considers the perpetration of such illegalities necessary for the maintenance of the unity of the Unionist Party?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The first

Notice I had of the Question was on entering the House this afternoon.

MR. CLANCY: Then I beg to give Notice that I will ask this Question to-morrow at the sitting of the House.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOT AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which he had given him private Notice, Whether the Government would grant an investigation into the disturbances at Mitchelstown in September last, at which Members of the House, priests, and newspaper reporters would have an opportunity of giving evidence as to what occurred? He also asked, whether it was to be understood, from the reply given to the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) on the previous evening, that the Chief Secretary contemplated the production of any Papers with regard to the results of the inquiry already held; and, if so, what Papers would be produced?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have not received Notice of this Question either; but I think I can answer the hon. Gentleman without Notice. The inquiry referred to is one of a Departmental character, and was held for Departmental purposes. I do not propose to hold any other inquiry. With regard to the question of publishing parts of that inquiry, which I understand was the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), I am considering whether this would be possible.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ARREST OF MR. W. O'BRIEN, M.P.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked, Whether the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland could give the House the exact terms of the warrant upon which the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) had been arrested; also, whether warrants had been issued against other persons, or arrests made, for taking part in the alleged illegal meeting on the 8th of this month in a proclaimed district; and, if so, against whom?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid I have not got the warrant here, as I did not receive Notice; but I gave the substance of it to the House yesterday. If my memory serves me aright, the hon. Member was arrested for inciting to, and taking part in, an unlawful assembly. I think that is accurate.

STATE-AIDED COLONIZATION.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's), who had a Motion upon the Paper upon this subject for discussion at the Evening Sitting, asked, Whether, as the Motion was to be postponed, the Government would give a pledge to supply a subsequent opportunity for the discussion of the question?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I think my hon. Friend has exercised a wise discretion in postponing his Motion, as the Government could not give him a complete answer this evening. An opportunity will be given him on the Estimates, or in some other way, to invite the House to grapple with and express an opinion upon this subject.

MR. SETON-KARR asked for a more definite answer from the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I will undertake that the hon. Member shall have an opportunity.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he would take care to bring forward the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill at an hour that would permit of the principle of the Bill being discussed?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that the time at which the Bill would come on must depend upon the arrangements made by his right hon. Friend the Leader of the House; but he had no doubt it would be brought up at a time that would afford hon. Members an opportunity for discussing it.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): May I ask, whether that time will be within five minutes of the hour of adjournment?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[BILL 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): Sir, viewing this Bill as a whole I can only add my voice to the chorus of general approval which has been given to it by almost every speaker who has taken part in the debate. I also desire to follow their example, and not to discuss at any length the principles of the Bill, but rather those provisions of it under which I take exception. There are three main provisions of the measure of which I disapprove. I do not think I can vote for the provision in favour of selecting members of the County Council as aldermen are selected now in the Town Councils, because I think the time has gone by when any Board such as it is proposed to establish should be otherwise than directly elected, and not selected by any system whatever. Therefore, I object to the provisions which relate to selected members. I also object to the provisions which deal with the police, and I shall be prepared to support any well-devised Amendment to get rid of the proposal which gives a jurisdiction over the police, in order to place the management of that body under the sole control of the County Council. My great objection, however, is to the licensing provisions and the Licensing Clauses of the Bill. My first two objections have already undergone considerable discussion, and I propose, therefore, to deal at once with the Licensing Question, in which for a great number of years I have taken a special and a particular interest. These provisions seem to be threefold. First, they transfer the licensing authority from the magistrates, as at present constituted, to the new County Council to be elected by the ratepayers. Now, it seems to me, that that transfer is a natural sequence of the Bill, because if the entire administration of the country is to be handed over to the new County Council, the administration of the Licensing Laws and the power to deal with finances under the Licensing Laws should also be transferred to the new body. If the proposals end there, I should have great pleasure in supporting them. The change of the Local Authority is, I think, an improvement rather than otherwise, inasmuch as it hands over a question of such vital importance to the people of this country to the ratepayers in touch with their Representatives, instead of leaving it in the hands of an irresponsible body of men, of whom, however, I wish it to be understood that I have nothing disrespectful to say. But the Bill goes further—one of the clauses proposes to give to the County Council power to refuse to renew public-house licences. This proviso appears to me to be entirely unnecessary, because such a power exists in the present licensing authority, and would, of course, exist in the licensing authority that is set up in its place. I therefore think it would be wise to omit that clause altogether, as it is absolutely unnecessary. Then the Bill goes on to give to the new Councils power to close public-houses on Sunday. This is carrying out the idea which has been expressed from both of the Front Benches of this House. I have no great objection to urge against it, except that this House has more than once affirmed, by large majorities, the principle of Sunday Closing over the whole of the United Kingdom; and temperance reformers prefer to watch until they can get what they have been aiming at for many years—namely, the entire closing of public-houses on Sunday. There is, however, a fourth proposal which is a most serious one—I refer to the Compensation Clauses of the Bill. Whatever boon is given to temperance reformers is entirely cancelled by the monstrous proposal to create and compensate an entirely new vested interest which is to be entitled to compensation. I shall be glad if the House will examine this proposal a little more closely. In the first place, there is one attempt on the part of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Mr. Ritchie) to meet the injustice which undoubtedly prevails to the people who suffer from the existence of public-houses, and who have no power to resist the creation of new public-houses. The right hon. Gentleman proposes in the Bill to bring such questions within touch of the people; but his proposals are limited in two ways—first, by the Compensation Clause, and, secondly, by certain transfers of revenue to the County Council. I fully recognize the serious character of the opposition which has been brought against another view of the Compensation Clause by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), with whom on most points I act heartily in concert. In the speech delivered by my right hon. Friend yesterday, he referred to the proposal to transfer the revenue derived from public-house licences to the County Council. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It has been objected, in the first place, that the transfer of the licences from the Imperial to the Local Authority would give the latter an interest in a traffic which is injurious and objectionable."

I certainly hold that opinion. The right hon. Gentleman then goes on to say—

> "I cannot help thinking that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and those who think with him, have not really the courage of their opinions and sufficient faith in their cause when they put forward such an argument. If this traffic is, as they say, an evil traffic, if to get rid of it is an advantage to the district concerned, if they are satisfied that they at once convince the majority in many districts of these facts, and probably, in the long run, the majority in all districts, why should they be afraid of these clauses?"

I should like to tell my right hon. Friend and the House why we are afraid of these clauses. These clauses give an interest in the retention of public-houses, in consequence of the transfer of the revenue derived from licences. I think it is quite enough for us to have to deal with the interest of the ratepayers in this House; but if we are to add to the difficulty, our work will be greatly increased, and, in my opinion, there is no necessity whatever for this transfer of the licence revenue. The same amount might easily be given from other sources without creating this embarrassment and establishing a palpable injustice. In those particular sober communities, where they have already limited the number of public-houses and the proportion of public-houses to the population is much smaller than any other districts, they are, by the Bill, fined for their sobriety, and a premium is given for districts which have been most lax in granting licences, and where, consequently, there are more paupers. In one town which I know very well there has been a large increase of pauperism, owing to this laxity, and additional burdens have been laid upon the rates. In districts where the people have been most sober, where great moral and Christian sentiments are strongest, in districts that are most anxious to reduce the facilities for the sale of intoxicating liquors, in endeavouring to give effect to their wishes the people find themselves face to face with a heavy money loss. It is proposed by the Bill to hand over the revenue derived from public-house licences to the County Councils; and, secondly, to pay compensation. We have heard a good deal of the £300,000 which it is said would be forthcoming for the County Councils from this revenue being made over to them and rendered available for the payment of compensation. I understood, from the gesture of assent which the President of the Local Government Board gave to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, that he consented to devote this revenue to the compensation of publicans whose licences may not be renewed. But how far is that sum likely to go, and is it for the publicans and the ratepayers to find the necessary sum to compensate the owners of public-houses which the County Councils, in touch with the people, refuse a renewal of the licence? I will venture to give a few instances which have come under my notice in regard to this question of compensation to publicans. About seven years ago, in a mining district, a small six-roomed house with a quarter of an acre of land was put up to auction. A firm with which I am connected bid up to £390, and then stopped; the property was sold for £400. In the following year it required a licence, and when four years later minerals were discovered under the house, it was purchased by my firm, who let down the soil upon which it stood. The manner in which the compensation was awarded is precisely the same as that which it is proposed to award compensation under this Bill. The question was referred to arbitration, and the result was that the value was assessed at £2,200 for the six-roomed house, owing to the fact that the owner had secured a licence. The house was not in a village itself, but half-a-mile from a village, so that £1,800 appears to be the value attached to a country public-house. Let me give another case, an instance of a suburban public-house outside the metropolis. In 1884, a house at Woodford was sold for £800. It is now carried on as a public-house under the name of the Railway Bell; the occupier of the house, who was also the owner, died in 1886, and in 1887 the house was sold by auction as a licensed public-house and fetched £8,800, and therefore the value of a suburban public-house licence not in London, for Woodford is in Essex, some miles from London, is £8,000. Let me give another case of a public-house situated in London itself, which it was found necessary to pull down. The case went for arbitration and the owner of the public-house was fortunate enough to secure the services of my hon. and learned Friend opposite the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), so that no one can be surprised that he got the fullest amount the jury could possibly award. In that case the difference between the value of the house as a dwelling-house and as a licensed house was no less than £38,000.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth): There was no case of that kind in which I was concerned. There was, I believe, a transaction in which £38,000 was paid, not as the difference between the value of a licensed house and a dwelling-house, but as the value of the whole property.

MR. CAINE: Then I will let the case go; but I will give another instance which occurred last year in which the difference between the value of an ordinary house and a licensed house was assessed at £32,000. Therefore if the House will accept these figures, it will be seen that £1,800 is the value of a country public-house licence, £8,000 of a suburban, and £32,000 for a gin palace. I suppose for the sake of argument we exclude the London gin palace, and take the probable value of public-houses throughout the country in the same way as the value of a licensed village public-house and suburban public-house. It will be found that the average compensation to be given under the arbitration clauses of this Bill throughout the country will be nearer £5,000 than any other sum. Let me take the case of my own constituency, Barrow-in-Furness. Suppose that it is proposed to reduce the number of public-houses there by 30. There are there 53 public-houses, 16 beer-houses, and 50 licenced shops, or 119 in all. What I want to emphasize is, that whatever compensation is going to be given for the suppression of the licensed public-houses will come almost entirely out of the pockets of the ratepayers, and that this ear-mark revenue of which we hear so much will be ridiculously insufficient. Taking the average licensed public-houses in Barrow, and placing the compensation at £2,000 for each, as the difference between the value of a licensed house and an ordinary house, if 30 are suppressed there will be a loss to the revenue derived from licence duties of about £600 per annum. That alone would be a distinct consideration to the ratepayers, and here is where my objection to the Licensing Clauses of the Bill comes in. We should have to persuade the ratepayers, before they get rid of the evil of establishing public-houses, to a loss of revenue amounting to £600 a-year. The average payment per house in the county is £17 18*s*., and the beer-houses £3 10*s*. But the question of compensation also comes in, and if 30 houses are to be bought on the basis of a village public-house in the neighbourhood of Barrow, the total amount paid in the shape of compensation will be something like £60,000. To provide compensation for the abolition of a single public-house in Barrow-in-Furness, the licensing authority would have to save £240 a year for nine or ten years, for that is just the amount which the earmarked increase of 20 per cent would produce annually. It is therefore abundantly clear that the publicans must be compensated out of the pockets of the ratepayers, and the question, as it is called, of compensation from the publicans themselves may be entirely dismissed from consideration. And now let me refer for a moment to some of the arguments brought forward by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. The Government have endeavoured to create a vested interest, the burden of which must fall on the public. My right hon. Friend made a remarkable statement upon the existence of a vested interest. He said that the highest Local Authorities had been consulted by more than one Government, and that their opinion was that there was an undoubted vested interest in a licence. He also told us that he had drafted a Bill of his own when he was President of the Local Government Board. I am sorry that my right hon. Friend is not in his place, because I should like to ask him if he consulted his own Law Officers at the time, and what their opinion was. One of those Law Officers — the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James)—is in the House now, and I hope he will give an answer to the question as to what his opinion was in regard to this vested interest. There is another distinguished Law Officer sitting in another part of the House, my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). I wish to know if the right hon. Member for West Birmingham put into his Bill any clauses which provided compensation for the publicans; and, if so, what they were? I think the answer to that question will be a valuable contribution to the discussion. I should also like to know whether the present Law Officers of the Crown are prepared to declare that there is an undoubted vested interest in a licence? If they are prepared so to declare, why is a clause introduced into the Bill to create that which already exists? I have always understood that the great, if not the sole, object of legislation is to make provisions which do not already exist. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham also told the Temperance Reformers that the principle of Local Option will be accepted and practically applied under this Bill, and he said that under the Bill the majority of the inhabitants of any licensing district will elect representatives to the County Council, which has the power to do away with every licence in the district if it thought fit. What would it cost the ratepayers of Barrow-in-Furness to get rid of the whole of their licensed public-houses? The cost would make that an impossibility; but let us consider how the principle of Local Option, if it be accepted, is to be applied under this Bill. I always warned my hon. Friend the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), when he has brought forward from time to time his general Resolution in regard to Local Option, that when he came within real touch of the House, he would find that a great many Members had voted with him who did not intend what he himself intended by Local Option. Those of us, however, who have studied the question, know what we mean by it. What we want is that the ratepayers of any given district should have placed in their hands the power to protect themselves efficiently against having public-houses thrust upon them against their will by the licensing authority. That is my definition of Local Option. How is Local Option going to be applied under this Bill? In the first place, let me take the example of my own constituency. I am afraid that, as the Bill stands, Barrow-in-Furness may be deprived of the separate right of licensing; because, under the Bill, it will become a portion of a licensing district only. Suppose the people of Barrow declared their wish to reduce the number of public-houses by one-half, or wish to elect a Prohibitionist candidate to advocate the suppression of public-houses altogether, that would be an expression of opinion on the part of the ratepayers that, as far as their opinion goes, it is in favour of the principle of Local Option. But the member whom they send to the County Council will be associated with six representatives from other districts, so that he will have to face six other representatives, all of whom, from anything we know, may be elected in the publican's interest. For instance, if his borough is in Lancashire, one of the representatives may be a Liverpool man in favour of that heresy which has brought about so much drunkenness in Liverpool—the heresy of free licensing. Under these circumstances, we should not know where we are. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham says that the Bill practically gives Local Option; but, as a matter of fact, it only gives a particular district a ninth voice in deciding what shall be done in regard to its own district. I have already referred to Sunday Closing. We believe that the House of Commons is absolutely prepared to close public-houses on Sunday. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham contended that no fresh vested interest can arise under the Bill. That is perfectly true; but there is nothing in that, for there are already as many licences in existence as the trade can carry, as they can be removed from one on to the other, so as to last for all time. My right hon. Friend also says that compensation is fixed on a fair and moderate basis, to be paid out of the pockets of the publicans themselves. I am certainly astonished that my right hon. Friend should make such a statement as that, in the face of what he would have discovered if he had gone through a single sum of division and subtraction. I have already shown how insufficient the ear-mark revenue will be to provide compensation. My right hon. Friend says the publicans are conducting a legal traffic, over which the Legislature has, to a certain extent, thrown its shield and protection. I absolutely deny that legislation has thrown its shield and protection over the public-house. The express intention of all the Bills which have been passed by this House in regard to the sale of intoxicating liquors has been to throw the shield and protection of the Legislature over the people, and not over the public-house. What is the public-house? It is created for the benefit of the public, and the contention of the law is that he is the servant of the public, and for that purpose he gets his public-house licence for one year and no longer. That is the vested interest of which they say so much. Why has he to come up every year to get the licence renewed? It is because the State knows it is a dangerous trade, and it has retained in every Statute which has been passed the right to revise that trade, to restrict it, and, in my judgment, the right to prohibit it. The publican is required to come up at the end of 12 months to show that he is as respectable a man as he was when he began. It is a great delusion to suppose that any man may be a publican. I know an instance where money was subscribed to start a man in a public-house, but it was found that he had been convicted of felony, and therefore could not hold a licence. He could start a grocer's shop, and was good enough to have a seat in this House, but he was not good enough to be entrusted with a licence that would enable him to carry on a dangerous trade. The whole licensing legislation of this country has been to interpose a shield and protection between the people and those who are engaged in a dangerous trade. What is the reason why a policeman can walk into a public-house at any time and see what is going on? He cannot walk into any other business place, and the reason why he can enter a public-house is because it is recognized as a trade which creates crime; that it is a poverty-creating trade; and, furthermore, it is placed under the supervision of the police because it is a dangerous trade. The object of the Licensing Laws of the country has not been to throw a shield and protection over a legal trade, but over the people; and it is because the proposals of the Government and the present Bill are re-actionary, and contrary to the principle on which all legislation right along the line has hitherto proceeded, that I intend to give them my uncompromising opposition. Let me compare the compensation under this Bill with that which was proposed 16 or 17 years ago by Mr. Bruce, now Lord Aberdare. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham said that the Temperance Reformers were responsible for the defeat of Mr. Bruce's Bill. But that idea is altogether fallacious. I was one of the Temperance Party which he says opposed the Bill, and secured its rejection. He added that in his opinion they had made a great mistake. I should quite agree with my right hon. Friend if that were true, and that they did make a great mistake; but it is altogether incorrect to suppose that the Temperance Reformers secured the rejection of the Bill. I myself at that time called one of the largest meetings ever held in Liverpool, at which a resolution was unanimously passed, calling on this House to give a second reading to the Bill, and a meeting of the United Kingdom Alliance expressed its approval on the second reading. Their opposition to Mr. Bruce's Bill was no more than that which my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham himself offers to the present Bill. The right hon. Gentleman says that he is in favour of the second reading of the Bill; but he has told the House that he does not intend to support the proposals contained in it in regard to the police. We supported Mr. Bruce's Bill, and were prepared to vote for the second reading; but, at the same time, we declared our objection to the Compensation Clauses. Therefore, the Temperance Reformers were no more opposed to the second reading of Mr. Bruce's Bill than my right hon. Friend is now opposed to the present Bill. Let me look at the effect of the Compensation Clauses in the Bill of 17 years ago. They proposed that every publican's licence of whatever description should be continued annually, subject, of course, to good behaviour, until the General Licensing Sessions held after the expiration of 10 years from the commencement of that Act, and should absolutely determine at the end of such Sessions. Compensation was no more recognized then than now. It was only recognized as a matter of expediency, with a desire to get the Bill through in some way or other. The compensation was put at 10 years' lease of the licence, and after that the vested interest ceased, and there was only to be one licence for every 1,000 inhabitants. The offer made to the Temperance Reformers 17 years, ago as compared with that offered to them to-day, was generous in the extreme. I did my best to get Mr. Bruce's Bill passed, but I had not much influence at the time, and my action was confined to Liverpool. If the Bill had passed, the vested interest of the publican would have disappeared at the end of 10 years. In Mr. Bruce's Bill we saw finality; where is finality under this Bill? The thing is to go on for ever. A 10 years' lease was given in Mr. Bruce's Bill in consequence of the growth of temperance sentiment, and the effect of the measure was to create a competition between public-house proprietors as to which of them should be bought up. Under the present Bill, whenever it is necessary to fix compensation, the authorities will have to go back to 1888 in order to find out what the value of a public licence was in that year. I cannot imagine that my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board intends to persevere with the Compensation Clauses of the Bill. I understood him to say, in the speech he made yesterday, that the Church of England Temperance Society have passed resolutions in favour of his Compensation Clauses.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Allow me to explain. What I said was that my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Manchester (Sir William Houldsworth) was a prominent member of that society, and he had expressed his approval of the general principle of the Bill in reference to licences.

Mr. CAINE: I should like to read the resolution which was passed by the Church of England Society, and which was moved by my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Manchester. It is as follows:—

> "That this Committee does not recognize any vested interest in a licence, and, consequently, any right to compensation on its withdrawal. That the only equitable claim to compensation would be for money laid out, loss sustained, and disturbance of a tenant. That in no case could it agree to compensation being made a first charge on the rates as proposed in the Bill. That the above equitable claim would properly be met by an increased percentage on the licence duties as proposed by the Bill, and the application of a certain portion of the licence duties to that purpose, such application being a first charge on these duties."

I cannot understand how anybody moving a resolution of that nature can support the clauses in the present Bill, in which 99 per cent of the compensation is to be drawn out of the pockets of the ratepayers, and not out of the pockets of the publicans at all. On the contrary, I regard it as a strong condemnation of the Compensation Clauses of the Bill. There is one other point I should like to refer to before I sit down. Under the Bill boroughs with a population of less than 50,000 will lose their individual licensing powers. I have a list of places here which, according to the Census of 1881, had a population of less than 50,000 people, but all of which now have a population of more than 50,000, and represent a population altogether of nearly 500,000. On behalf of the people of those boroughs who are interested in temperance reformation, I ask the right hon. Gentleman to keep for them their power of licensing, without being complicated with eight other members of the County Council who would have to vote upon it.

Mr. RITCHIE: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman; but there seems to be a little misunderstanding upon this point, which I should like to explain. It does not necessarily follow that by the Bill boroughs under 50,000 will not be Licensing Authorities within themselves; because it is possible that they may have six representatives in the County Council, and, therefore, be capable of being licensing divisions.

Mr. CAINE: I will not pursue the matter further, except to say that, according to the Bill, boroughs under 50,000 people are not to have a separate licensing jurisdiction. Among the towns which had a population of less than 50,000 in 1881 who have now more than 50,000 are Great Yarmouth, a municipal borough; Tottenham, a local board district; Barrow, a petty sessional division co-equal with the area of the Bill; Wigan, a quarter sessions borough; Hanley, a municipal borough; Merthyr Tydvil, a local board district; Devonport, a municipal borough; and York, also a municipal borough. All these boroughs at the last Census had populations between 45,000 and 50,000. But I have got no figures except in regard to the boroughs of Wigan and Barrow. The population of those boroughs is now much beyond 50,000, and has probably reached 55,000. At the time the Census was taken, the population of Wigan was greatly diminished by a strike among the miners, which caused many hundreds of families to leave the town, and brought down the population by many thousands. This is clearly proved by the fact that there were 1,300 empty houses at the time the Census was taken, representing, at least, a population of 7,000. I think it is unfair to impose upon these boroughs, which have now a population of more than 50,000, disabilities and want of authority simply because, seven years previous to the introduction of this Bill, they contained a less population than 50,000. My hon. Friend the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) has asked me to press the case of his own constituency upon the President of the Local Government Board. I hope something will be done for the boroughs I have mentioned, in order to secure for them the right of dealing with the question of licensing in their own way. I think the facts I have brought before the House completely demolish the contention of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham and the President of the Local Government Board, that there is any appreciable amount of compensation to be got out of the publicans themselves. I shall certainly give my uncompromising opposition to the so-called Compensation Clauses of the Bill. I think the Government would act wisely by withdrawing them altogether, leaving the whole licensing to be dealt with by separate legislation. I must warn the right hon. Gentleman that if he persists in wedging a Licensing Bill into a Local Government Bill, it will be the duty of the Temperance Reformers to move a considerable number of Amendments in an endeavour to improve that Licensing Bill, and he must expect a considerable number of evenings to be devoted to discussing a question which a large number of Members believe to be of paramount importance to the welfare of the country, and to resisting proposals which they believe will build up a solid wall between them and the accomplishment of the object of the Temperance Reformers that they will never be able to break down.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Edward Clarke) (Plymouth): Sir, there is in one respect, at all events, an agreeable contrast between the speech which we have just heard and that delivered last night by the hon. Baronet the Member for Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), because the hon. Baronet attacked Her Majesty's Government very bitterly upon the licensing proposals they now make, and said that the shame of those proposals must rest on them, and he wound up by alleging that the policy embodied in the Licensing Clauses was never exceeded in the meanness of its conception, the injustice of its scope, or the cruelty it inflicted on the industrial classes. The hon. Member who has just sat down, who is equally entitled to claim to be an ardent supporter of the temperance cause, has, on the other hand, dealt fairly with the proposals of the Government, and recognized that in the Licensing Clauses of the Bill there is a real attempt to deal with a difficulty that has baffled Parliament for many years past. I do not propose to enter into all the details of the speech which has just been delivered. No doubt some points of detail have been raised by my hon. Friend which could most properly be treated in

Committee, and which are matters of fair discussion and argument. The point referred to by the hon. Gentleman as to the numerical limit of population of towns which are to be allowed to remain licensing areas is one that may very well be dealt with in that way; but, taking the Licensing Clauses as a whole, the Government has proposed them deliberately and carefully, with a regard, on the one hand, to that which it believes to be fair and right to the interest of those engaged in that trade; and, on the other hand, to the desire which Parliament has expressed very often that there should in some way be given to the people themselves a power of dealing in their localities with the granting of licences. I wish to show how the Government has tried to deal with the various difficulties that have arisen in connection with this matter. But first I will answer the challenge which has been thrown out by my hon. Friend who has just spoken as to the opinions of those who are responsible for advising the Government on matters of law in regard to any vested interests on the part of the licensed victuallers. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was Home Secretary I expressed the opinion which I now repeat, and which represents the advice on which the Government has acted and is prepared to act. It is that under the Licensing Statutes Justices are not justified in refusing to renew a public-house licence simply upon the ground that there is no need for it, or that there are too many public-houses in the neighbourhood.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman state under what Act of Parliament that power exists?

Sir EDWARD CLARKE: My hon. and learned Friend does not usually find it necessary to interrupt in the middle of a speech to put such a question. I should not have made such a statement if I had not been prepared to go into the matter. I listened last night with great interest to the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cumberland, who argued against the idea that there was a vested right or interest on the part of those licensed to keep public-houses. The hon. Baronet founded his proposition chiefly on a sentence which he quoted, and which I myself have seen quoted in a number of temperance publications; and he said that Mr. Justice Field, in the Court of Queen's Bench, in the month of November, 1882, stated that the Legislature recognized no vested interest at all in any holder of the licence. I have seen that sentence before in inverted commas, and the hon. Baronet quoted it last night. The case referred to was dealt with by Mr. Justice Field, and decided in the Queen's Bench in November, 1882. In the first place, I have carefully gone through the five different reports of the decision, and the judgment in the case, and in no one of the reports will the sentence which the hon. Baronet quoted to the House last night be found. In the next place, the decision was not a decision on this point at all, but on a different Act of Parliament. Anybody who refers to any of the reports of the case will find that the Judges laid great stress upon the words of the Act which had quite recently been passed, and upon which they were called to put judicial construction. The Act related to beer dealers and retail licences. The words inserted in that Act were these—

> "Notwithstanding anything in Section 8 of the Wine and Beerhouse Act of 1869, or in any other Act now in force, the licensing justices shall be at liberty, in their free and unqualified discretion, either to refuse the certificate for the sale of beer,"

and so on, or to grant the same. Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Stephen had to deal with the case in question under the Act of 1882, and having before them the words, "in their free and unqualified discretion," said that those words indicated exactly what they stated—namely, that there was to be no suggestion of any kind as to the limit of their unqualified discretion. That is being quoted in every circular sent out by the United Kingdom Alliance and other temperance bodies; but I am afraid that the hon. Baronet has been misled into attributing to Mr. Justice Field an expression which that learned Judge never used. So much for the authority which the hon. Baronet quoted last night. The question now before us arises on the Act of 1828, as dealt with in the Acts of 1872 and 1874. The Act of 1872 established a clear distinction between the granting of a new licence and the renewal of an old licence. The words of the Act were that where a licensed person applied for renewal—(1.) he need not attend at the annual licensing meeting unless required by the Justices. In ordinary cases, licences which are upon the register are to be renewed as a matter of course. Not only need not the licensed person attend unless required, but (2.) the Justices are not to entertain an objection unless written notice of intention to oppose has been served upon the licensed person seven days previous to the meeting; and (3.) the Justices are not to receive evidence except on oath. Those were the provisions in the Act of 1872. The Act of 1874 went still further, and provided that the notice to the licensed person to attend, without the service of which the Justices had no right to entertain an objection at all, could only be given to the licensed person on some ground personal to himself. The state of things stands thus. Suppose the Justices were to make up their minds before the Licensing Sessions were held that they would not grant a renewal of any of the licences, the Court of Queen's Bench would interfere on a *mandamus* and compel them to deal with the licences separately, and they cannot refuse any licence to a person already licensed unless they call the person before them. The Act of 1874 said—

> "Whereas by Section 42 of the principal Act it is enacted that a licensed person applying for a renewal of his licence need not attend in person at the general annual licensing meeting unless he is required by the Licensing Justices so to attend, be it enacted that such requisition shall not be made save for some special cause personal to the licensed person to whom such requisition is sent."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) asked, whether the hon. and learned Gentleman held that the words "some special cause personal to the licensed person" meant "personal misconduct"—on the part of the licencee?

Sir EDWARD CLARKE: Sir, in my opinion, the words, "some special cause personal to the licensed person," would mean some cause such as personal misconduct, or the permission of conduct in the house which could be made a subject of complaint against himself. It is impossible to contend that if there were 50 licences and the Justices came to the conclusion that 48 were sufficient, notice to the other two to attend would be for a special cause personal to them. I say that, taking these Statutes altogether, it is not competent to the magistrates to refuse the renewal of licences which have been previously granted except on some special cause personal to the holder of the licence. The hon. Baronet last night asked whether any lawyer would venture to contend that there was a vested interest in licensed premises? I answer that there is, and I believe that the Acts, properly read, do give to the licensed victualler a vested interest in the continuous enjoyment of his licence. The condition of the property, moreover, I should think, was a personal cause, as the licensed person had to keep it in good order. At Common Law anybody who chose had a right to keep a public-house. There have been restrictions imposed by Statute, partly for the sake of good order and partly for the benefit of the Revenue; and ever since the time of Henry VII., when the provisions were first introduced with regard to the power of the Justices to license, this trade has always been considered and dealt with by the Legislature as a lawful trade. I submit to the House that it would be impossible for the Legislature, with any fairness and honesty, substantially to confiscate the property of a very large number of persons carrying on a lawful trade without giving compensation. It has never been suggested or maintained by any responsible Leader or Party in the House that that course would be a fair course. But, Sir, this is not a mere question of legal right, upon which lawyers may, and very likely will, differ. It is also a question of what is fair and just. It ought to be borne in mind that, besides publicans' licences, there are beer-houses, which were licensed before the 1st of May, 1869. It is impossible to contend that the owners of these beer-houses have not a vested interest, for the magistrates have no power of refusing a renewal of such licences, except on four specified grounds. When this question is being considered there is also another class of licences that ought to be borne in mind—namely, provisional licences, granted in respect of premises not already erected. By the Act passed in 1872 these most salutary licences were provided for. Before that, speculative persons used to take corner plots and build houses in the hope of getting a licence when the houses were completed, and used to go on applying year after year, till at last, out of sheer pity, a licence was not unfrequently granted. Since the passing of that Act, however, very few houses have been built as a matter of speculation, and in the mere hope of getting a licence. Now, the custom is to apply for a provisional licence, which is granted upon the plans being submitted to the magistrates, and it is confirmed when a certificate is presented to the magistrates signed by the architect and testifying that the building has been completed according to the plans. Can anyone say that it would be fair or honest that when a man had gone to the expense of building a house according to plans approved by the magistrates the licence should, after a year or two, be taken away without compensation? There is a deliberate invitation by Parliament to people before they build public-houses to go and consult the magistrates as to the position of the houses and the arrangements they propose to make, and an implied pledge is given that they will be continued in the enjoyment of these premises. The very illustrations given by the hon. Member for Barrow in regard to the value of licences show how unfair it would be to cancel them without compensation. It would be outrageous that a man who has purchased a licensed house and paid many thousand pounds upon the generally prevailing idea as to the right to a continuance of a licence, and its value based upon that right, should suddenly find himself mulcted in £8,000 or £9,000, by being deprived of the licence which he bought. I do not think that is a policy which would be likely to be accepted by the House, and I do not know of any person occupying a prominent position in any Government who has supported it. It has always been hoped that this question would be, in some way or other, dealt with in a Local Government Bill when brought in. The suggestion of the temperance reformers has always been that, there not being an elected body to grant licences, it was desirable occasionally to have a *plébiscite* on the subject to enable the ratepayers to say whether they would have any more licences granted in the district. The whole question has always been beset with difficulties, and no one has ever defined the area in which each *plébiscite* should take place. So long as the Justices were the Licensing Authority there was, perhaps, a scintilla of reason at the back of the appeal that an occasional *plébiscite* should be taken; but if the House should find itself fortunate enough to be able to deal with the whole question of Local Government, and if it should establish for the purpose County Councils, which will be directly elected by the people to represent them in local matters, it would be sheer absurdity to have an occasional *plébiscite* of the people to say whether they disagree with the Board they themselves have elected. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) are both, I am glad to say, of opinion that this question ought to be dealt with by the Local Government Authority. The hon. Member for Barrow said he hoped the Government would abandon the proposals in regard to licensing, except those transferring the licensing authority from the Justices to the County Council. But the mere transfer of authority, without safeguards, from the Justices to the local Governing Body would do a great injustice, against which I have been and am now protesting. The Justices are bound by the law to which I have referred, and they have to deal with persons to whom they or their predecessors had given a privilege, and over the exercise of which privilege it is their duty to watch. But if the power were transferred from the Justices, who are governed by these Acts of Parliament, and have to exercise judicial functions, and who would be compelled by a *mandamus* to deal with each separate case, and not make a rule to govern a set of cases—if these Justices are to be replaced by an elected Body without judicial functions, but with absolute capacity to deal with the matter just as it liked, and if no provision were made for compensation, we should have done the mischief of handing over the interests of those who had embarked in a lawful trade to the tender mercies of a chance majority in any particular district in any particular year. Suppose that absolute authority were handed over to the local Governing Body without any check upon the cancelling of licences, and this power were to be largely used, great agitation and excitement would prevail. We might have all the houses in a particular district shut up at a particular time by a Local Authority, with the smallest amount of real knowledge of the wants of the neighbourhood, or consideration for the wishes of the minority of the people. What would be the result? I venture to say it would be quite intolerable. It would be difficult even to keep public order where the public-houses were shut up in this way, unless the sense of the people was very strongly in favour of such a step, in which case such a drastic measure would be quite unnecessary, as the public-houses would be starved out. In ordinary cases the inevitable result would be that a club would start up in almost every public-house that had been closed, and the wishes of the people would be strong enough to prevent any adequate check being placed upon the multiplication of clubs. I think the question of clubs is, after all, most important. A very poor service, indeed, would be done by the Temperance Party to the cause they had so long and ardently advocated, if, by a despotic act, they succeeded in shutting up the whole of the public-houses in a particular district, unless they had previously prepared themselves to deal with the difficult question of clubs. Then it is necessary, I submit, to make some provision with regard to compensation. The hon. Baronet, no doubt, remembers the year 1880. It was an epoch in the temperance agitation, which had been going on for many years before that. Before 1880 there had been almost from year to year a proposal of a definite character put before the House of Commons. The Permissive Prohibitory Bill provided that a certain majority should have the power of closing public-houses altogether. That Bill was before the House with varying fortunes for a considerable number of years before 1880, but it was killed in 1880, when the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) declared that though the Bill had received large support, he did not know five Members who really believed in its provisions and desired to support it. There was in those days a weakness in regard to the second reading, and many Members voted in its favour who would have voted against it if they thought it was likely to pass. After the Election of 1880 there came a Parliament of temperance proclivities, and the hon. Baronet opposite enjoyed his golden hour. The Resolution which was rejected by 100 votes in March, 1880, was carried by a substantial majority three months later; but in the hour of his triumph the hon. Baronet heard the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) complaining that in the Resolution the question of equitable compensation found no place.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): The House passed it, though.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE: Yes, Sir; if the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian voted for the Resolution, he voted for it with that reservation, and it was accepted by other Members of the House, with the knowledge that in the mind of him who would be the chief authority in that Parliament the question of compensation was closely and inextricably connected with the question of putting an end to the liquor traffic. Five years passed and nothing was done, and from 1880 until the present time no one had ventured to bring forward a positive proposal for introducing Local Option in the sense in which the hon. Baronet uses that expression. I appeal to the hon. Baronet to look back upon that history, and say if it is fair for him to attack the Government in the terms he used the previous night for attempting to deal with the matter? It has been complained that licences are dealt with by an authority irresponsible to the people. The Government says—"Let them be dealt with by an authority created by the people, and directly responsible to the people." There has been a very ardent combat over this question of compensation. Reference has been made in the debate to the defeat of the Bill of 1871, and the hon. Member who spoke last repudiated the idea that the temperance advocates in the House had defeated that Bill. The hon. Member is justified in his repudiation, because the temperance advocates in this House have never defeated anything except a Liberal Government. All those abstract Resolutions, which may mean anything or nothing, and which half-a-dozen different people interpret in half-a-dozen different ways, are all very well; but as soon as the question of compensation was approached, it was always found that among those who knew most about the circumstances of the case there was a unanimous opinion that some provision with regard to compensation must be made. The Bill of 1871 proposed to give compensation in the shape of a fixed tenure of 10 years.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: That was withdrawn.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE: I am aware of that; but I do not know how the hon. Baronet and his Friends can reconcile this with a profession of no compensation. Yet it is now put as an alternative suggestion from the other side—as something better than that which the Government now proposes. Surely, Sir, the hon. Baronet and his Friends could not accept that suggestion. Every week of every year they are making speeches in which they declare that it is an intolerable grievance that there should be so many public-houses as now exist, and if they consented that all these public-houses should continue for another 10 years, they would be guilty of something very like an infringement of the great principle which is the basis of their agitation. Well, they may not be able to accept a proposal of that kind; but that is no reason why they should not accept the proposal of the Government. The Government propose that, after the passing of the Bill, no new interest should be created in a licensed house. As to the existing houses, in respect of which, according to all equitable considerations, a vested interest does exist, surely the fairest thing is to say that there shall be an additional tax upon those who are carrying on the business, and that when a public-house is put an end to, compensation shall be paid in respect of it out of that tax or from the general funds of the county. The hon. Member for Barrow seems to have a very feeble faith in the principles which he advocates. He warned the House not to accept the proposals of the Government, on the ground that the tax on licences would constitute an overwhelming temptation for localities, and that these would be prepared to favour the existence of licensed houses, in order not to lose the contributions derived from them for the relief of local burdens. That is a very feeble faith indeed. I have always thought the hon. Baronet and his Friends had an unlimited belief in their own power to convert the people. I am not going to minimize the evils of excessive drinking. I know too much of the effects of excessive drinking upon the classes low down in the social scale; but, as far as the great majority of the working classes are concerned, I believe if we took an assembly of men, as numerous as that which the House of Commons contains, and these men were met together at a Trade Congress or a Trade Association of any kind, we should find at least as strong a repugnance on the part of them, as a body, to excess in intoxicating drinks as we find among Members of this House. I believe it is in that direction that the true work of the hon. Baronet lies, and if he can but succeed in spreading that feeling still more widely there will soon be no ground at all for hesitating to award compensation to the publicans. If the public-houses ceased to be used by the people they would cease to be valuable property, and it would become possible to deal with the publicans on very easy terms. If the great temperance associations had confined themselves to the propagation of the principle of abstinence, and had not indulged so much in the Christian virtue of finding fault with other people, the attainment of this condition of things would be still nearer than it is. There are some other matters which have been referred to, but which will more properly be dealt with in Committee. I hope I have shown the House, at all events, that the Government have dealt with this question with an honest desire to put an end to a controversy which has affected, and sometimes determined, political struggles for 20 years, without any really satisfactory result in legislation. Stopping with the passing of this Bill the creation of any new interest, making arrangements whereby partly, if not wholly, from the contributions of the trade itself, compensation shall be paid when the property is taken away without any fault on the part of the man who had enjoyed it, I hope it will be found on consideration that the proposals of the Government are fair and reasonable proposals, and that the House may well accept them as the solution and termination of a very difficult controversy.

MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, it was to be regretted that the debate on such a large measure as this should have a tendency to run largely in the direction of discussion of the Licensing Clauses. He was, however, himself about to err in that direction in following some of the remarks which had been made that day on both sides of the House; and he submitted that it was not altogether unimportant that the House should consider those clauses very carefully, with a view, if possible, of arriving at some definite conclusion which would lead them to a solution of the question. The present supplied golden opportunities which ought not to be lost. Governments were not fond of dealing with this question; it was not once in 20 years that a Government would be found which would undertake the responsibility of dealing with a subject involving such large interests, and which was surrounded by difficulties of no ordinary character. The chief objection which he had heard urged to the Licence Clauses of the Bill coming from the Temperance Party was on the ground of compensation. That had been ably dealt with by the hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), whom he was utterly unable to follow in the clearness and lucidity of his exposition; but there were one or two considerations connected with the question of compensation, and the amount of compensation, whatever it might be, that had not been dealt with in the debate, one or two of which, without labouring them, he should like to indicate to the House. The contention was that there was absolutely no right or title to the renewal of a licence. Now, if there was absolutely no such right, what was the meaning of the appeal to Quarter Sessions? If the Justices had in the first instance an absolutely unfettered power to terminate licences at the end of a year, what was meant by providing an appeal from their decision to Quarter Sessions? Again, how did hon. Members reconcile their contention with the justice of the practice to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred, whereby a person applying for a licence was called upon to bring up his plans to the Licensing Authority and make alterations in them at their suggestion? Could it be contended for a moment that the Legislature contemplated that magistrates should insist upon expensive buildings and great improvements to property, intending to terminate the licence at the end of the year, or holding that they had absolute right to do so without any cause?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I never said "without any cause."

MR. WHITBREAD said, he would come to the word "cause" directly. He meant, of course, misbehaviour or misconduct. A provision of a very recent Act referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman said a licence holder might obtain a renewal unless some complaint was made against him. Surely that meant that unless there was complaint of something personal the licence should be granted. Again, the Legislature provided that certain offences should be endorsed on the licence, but it provided also that after five years of continuous good behaviour those endorsements should be wiped out. Was not that a proof that the person licensed should, after five years, hold a clean licence? It implied that the licence should be under a sort of cloud for five years, after which time the endorsement was to be wiped out. How had all the rest of the world looked upon these licences? They had certainly not looked upon them as likely to terminate at the end of the year. In the case of public-houses large fines had been taken by landowners and even by large public bodies for leases, and contracts had been made for large expenditure on property. Was it dealing fairly between man and man that one party should take a heavy fine and insist upon a large expenditure with the intention of holding that at the end of a year, without misconduct on the part of the licence holder, the money expended on the property should be absolutely lost? Again, in the case of licensed houses being purchased under Act of Parliament by Railway Companies and other bodies, had anyone ever heard that it was seriously contended that the licences should not be renewed except for misconduct? Besides the legal grounds which the Solicitor General had stated, this matter rested upon universal practice. Now, if it were true that licences were terminable at the end of each year, how was it that in all the cases which had occurred in this century one could hardly put his finger upon a single case in which the licence was terminated except on the ground of misconduct? It might be asked whether there were any judicial decisions upon this point? The reason why they were unable to refer to decisions in the English Courts was because the appeals had rarely gone beyond Quarter Sessions; but the case of Clitheroe had been brought before the Judges in Dublin, who held that there was no justification for taking away the licence on the ground that there were too many licensed houses in the district. He would leave the legal aspect of the matter altogether, and say that there was a claim for compensation resting on the sense of what was equitable and just. The licensed victualler had a property, and to take it away without compensation was something very like confiscation. If the House were to give large powers of closing public-houses without compensation, had it been considered how such a power would work? He did not believe it would be possible to work such a provision at all, because it would break down when it came to the question of personal application. In the case put by the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine), what would the neighbourhood think of the justice of closing 30 public-houses without compensation, ruining the holders, and leaving the other 130 in the full enjoyment of their position and doing a better trade? The upshot of this would be that it would be found impossible to close the houses, because the sense of justice of the community would rebel against it. The hon. Member had referred to the Bill introduced by Mr. Bruce. But Mr. Bruce did not say that licence holders had no interest; he proposed to give them, in the way of compensation, 10 years' grace, at the end of which time the houses might be closed without any claim at all. His hon. Friend had expressed a preference for that plan. But let the House consider what it meant. If they gave seven, 10, or some number of years, after which no claim should be made, there would be an acknowledgment of some claim to compensation. In that case they seemed to be arming the licensed victualler with a tenfold power to claim compensation, because they were estimating it by a term of years. But what sort of agitation would be got up if, 10 years hence, it was certain that the licence holders would be deprived of their property without any fair compensation. He ventured to say, looking at the enormous interest involved, that at the close of that period there would be such an agitation that no other political question would get a hearing, and which would be disastrous to the Temperance Party in its results, and to the Government which attempted to carry out the operation. He desired to call the attention of those who so vehemently opposed this proposal to some of the things which were said by Mr. Bruce and by others against the attempt to deal harshly with this question. He remembered one passage quoted. It was a very instructive quotation. It referred to a town where large works were established, and the owners of those works being in possession of the land, and desiring the benefit of their workmen, wished to prohibit altogether the establishment of any licensed house on their land. They did prohibit it, but with what result? That the state of things was worse than if they had left it alone. If he remembered the figures aright, there was in the district at the time a population of 1,900, and there were 17 houses known to be selling illicit drink of one sort or another. The proprietors of the works being themselves the owners of the land, and having great power over it, made every effort to get rid of this state of things; but they found that as fast as they closed one of the houses another sprung up in another direction. The illustration might be multiplied a hundred fold. It always would be the case. If they went beyond what the feeling of the population was there would be a reaction, and, instead of getting a regulated sale of liquor for houses which the police could inspect and control, they would get houses without any regulation at all, and they would get a state of things in connection with the liquor trade very much worse than what it was at the present time. Surely the House might take a lesson from the successes of the past as well as from its failures. Would anyone in the House say that the state of things in regard to temperance in England was not better now than when Mr. Bruce introduced his Bill in 1871? He did not think anybody would get up and assert that. All of them were conversant with the immense improvement.

They could hardly run their eyes over any newspaper without being aware of that. If they looked at the reports on the conduct of the population, say on a Bank Holiday, or on a great festival, they noticed expressions of opinion on all sides that the conduct of the people in this matter was rapidly improving. But the improvement was not the result of any Act of Parliament for the closing of public-houses; but it was the result of a better state of feeling amongst the people themselves. Many causes had contributed to the improved state of things—education, better homes, better means of enjoyment, and he did not doubt the efforts of many good men who had devoted their lives to the cause. But these men did not seem to have any faith in their own success. This improved state of things had been brought about by influences which were all working for good, and solid good. Surely they had had enough experience of the failure of repressive legislation. The case he had quoted just now might be multiplied many times over. What he submitted was that intentions, however good they might be, could not be pleaded by Parliament in bar of condemnation if, shutting their eyes to the history of the past, and absolutely regardless of the consequences which inevitably followed, they took a false step in going beyond that which could be borne by the habits of the people at the time. He now desired to refer for a few minutes to the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). He desired to acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to act in a spirit of justice to the trade with which he (Mr. Whitbread) was connected. He acknowledged that frankly, and if he made any criticisms upon the scheme of the Bill, he really made them with a view of endeavouring to remove some of the friction which he was sure would attend the working of it, and not with a view of really controverting the principles which it laid down. Now, if the object of the Bill, or if the object of those who were called the Temperance Party, was really to reduce the number of licences, let them consider for a minute how that could be done most certainly, and with least opposition. The proposal had been made more than once, and it was repeated last night by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), that the 20 per cent increase of the licence duty should be set apart to form a fund for the compensation of licence holders. He approved of that proposal entirely. He thought the increased duty should be set apart, but that it should be set apart so that the Local Authority could not use it for any other purpose; that it should be absolutely used for that purpose, and that purpose alone. He thought that at the same time, as they were making provision for extinguishing licences by compensation, it would be absurd, on the other hand, to be creating new licences, and Local Authorities should not be allowed to touch this fund for any other purposes or to grant a new licence in a district until the licensed houses in that district became less in proportion to the population than it should be according to some reasonable scale which could be agreed upon by the House. That scale, of course, would have to be different in rural and urban districts, and there would have to be a distinct scale for the City of London, owing to the enormous number of people who daily went in and out, and who needed refreshment during the time they were there. He should say that the value of the licence when it was bought should be the present value, and not the value as laid down in the right hon. Gentleman's Bill—namely, the value at the time of the passing of the Bill. He hoped he understood the idea the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind when he made that proposal; it was that the value of the licence would go up. But surely the proposal was a premium upon bad management of houses, because a man might have given £5,000 for a licence just before the passing of the Bill, and might manage it so badly that the value might run down rapidly to £1,000. If the Local Authorities wanted to get rid of that house, they would be compelled to give the pre-existing value of £5,000. It would end, of course, in the Local Authorities never consenting to buy up such a house, although it might be the very one they wanted to get rid of. Local Authorities would, of course, be able to grant occasional licences for fairs and race meetings, and things of that sort. Then it would be said at once there was no provision for the growth of towns. He should propose to provide for that by the existing law—by granting a little greater power than was now possessed by the magistrates. He would suggest that the authorities might be able to transfer a licence from one house to another house within the district if such a transference were on all hands desirable.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had not exactly caught the hon. Gentleman's suggestion as to what should be regarded as the value of the licence.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, his suggestion was that the value should be the value at the time the compensation was granted. He thought they would have enormous difficulty in arriving, say 20 years hence, at what was the value of the house at the passing of the Bill. Now, his hon. Friend the Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) said it was absurd to propose to set aside the extra duty for compensation purposes, because the amount of the fund would be so small that it would do nothing. He was obliged to differ very much indeed from his hon. Friend on that subject, and he would here say at once that the estimate his hon. Friend gave of the value of licensed houses was exaggerated beyond all possibility. He could not understand where his hon. Friend got his figures from. All he could say was, that if the figures represented the hon. Gentleman's ideas of the value of licensed houses, licensed victuallers would like to have him on a jury which was called upon to assess the value of their houses. The hon. Gentleman arrived at his figures in a very extraordinary way. First of all he gave them a description of what he called a village house, which was established in the district of a mine with which he was connected, and which rose from the value of £400 as a dwelling house to £2,200 as a licensed house. What gave the House this increased value? The very same thing which gave the value to the mine. It was industry which created that value. It was the large number of persons drawn to the district, and he did not suppose that the value of the house when it was licensed as compared with the value when it was bought as a dwelling house was any greater than the value of the land when mineral was found in it as compared with the agricultural value of the land. His hon. Friend said it was a fair example of the village house. He (Mr. Whitbread) asserted that it was absurdly beyond the fair average value of village houses. Then the hon. Gentleman gave them the value of the suburban licensed house at £8,000. He had no doubt there were many suburban houses of the value of £8,000 and more, but he absolutely denied that that was anything like the average value. The hon Gentleman abandoned the case of the Liverpool Street house; he abandoned that on an explanation from the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke). Then the hon. Member took them to a house at Knightsbridge, and said that the value of the licence there was £30,000. It was possible that that might be the case, but that was not an average case. If £30,000 was the value of the licence, surely that was an argument which could be used against his hon. Friend. Did not that show him that if people were prepared to invest such enormous sums in licensed houses they must believe that they had some claim beyond a mere annual claim? Then his hon. Friend said the average value of licensed houses all over the country was £5,000. Having some knowledge of the subject, he (Mr. Whitbread) was bound to say that that was exaggerated—it was exaggerated beyond all bounds. He did not believe that that was the average value of full licences in the Metropolis, where things were dearer than anywhere else. The hon. Member said that this fund would do little or nothing owing to this enormous value. He would tell the hon. Member why it would do a good deal. It would do a good deal for the very reason that, although the average value of houses might be high, those which would be compensated first would be of very low value. One of the most certain things connected with this trade was this—that bad trade was a poor trade. A man who was doing a good and legitimate trade would not risk his property and licence for the sake of encouraging drunkenness. It was the houses that could not live which were driven to courses which must be condemned, and the tenants of such houses would be only too glad to get out if they could get compensation of any kind. Those were the houses which would be first compensated. Then he submitted to the judgment of the House that what they wanted to aim at was the reduction of the number of licences, and he was not prepared to say that there were not too many licences—he thought that in the country generally there were too many licences. But when Mr. Bruce introduced his Bill he estimated the number of licensed victuallers and beerhouse keepers at one in 182 of the whole population. Mr. Bruce then separated London from the Provinces and he showed that there were one in 300 of the population in London and one in 150 of the population in the Provinces. He (Mr. Whitbread) was sorry they had not got a Return which would throw some light on the subject now, because he was convinced if they had they would prove that they had arrived at a very different state of things. But still he agreed that it would be a good thing to further diminish the number of licences if that could be done with justice to the holders. But what he thought they did want was not a sudden and arbitrary and harsh and violent reduction, but a gradual reduction that could be effected without much opposition. There was great danger in going too fast. If they proceeded too fast in the matter of reductions other houses would spring up; some of them thinly disguised as clubs, and some not disguised at all. If more money were wanted than this 20 per cent he had a suggestion to make by which the difficulty might be met. If power were given to raise money on the security of half that fund, he thought they would get a large crop of licences extinguished by that means first, and they would have a fund to go gradually on with afterwards. They might ask, and ask with some justice, that a further portion of the licence duty should be allocated for this purpose. They would have justice on their side in making this claim, for the reason that this scheme of reducing houses by purchase was proposed to Mr. Bruce in 1871. It was proposed then that they should put a tax on the licences in order to form a compensation fund. They had reason to believe that Mr. Bruce lent not an unwilling ear to that proposal; but the opposition to the Bill of that day had reached such a pitch, that the Government felt themselves compelled to withdraw the measure. If that scheme had been adopted, if that opportunity had not been lost, he asserted, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that the decrease in the number of licences would have been such as to bring it within any scale that would at that time have been laid down by Parliament. They had lost the last 18 years in that respect, and he hoped they would not lose the 18 years which would follow this. These opportunities did not come very often. Then he would only say that if the idea of a purchase fund was not adopted generally by the whole country, he thought that the licence holders in the Metropolis, or in the County of London as defined by the Bill, should be treated differently from those in the Provinces. They thought they had some claim, both owing to the large population of London and also to the interests concerned, to be heard. They thought, also, that the peculiarities under which licences were held in London, differing as they did in the main from the way in which they were held in the country, gave them a claim to separate treatment. It was a fact that in London the bulk of the houses—he should say certainly three-fourths of them—were not held by brewers, but were held by the licence holders themselves. That might make the difference between the applicability of any scheme to London and to the country. At the same time he did not see the difference himself, but it was a fact. There was another consideration. In London, licences changed hands with extraordinary rapidity, and there was always an open market for the purchase of licences. He was confident that he was within the mark in stating that, on the average, licences in the Metropolis changed hands every five years. He thought that he would be right in saying they changed hands every four years; he was convinced they changed hands, certainly, every five years. The result was that there had always been a perfectly open market. A house could not be run up against the Local Authorities. The Local Authorities would only have to employ their broker, just as the Government employed a broker to buy Consols, and no one could tell who he was buying for. No one would have to give one shilling more than the real market value at the time. There would be no need for them to give a fancy price in order to get possession. Now, this scheme did something both for the advocates of temperance and for the trade itself. It, first of all, took away from the Local Authorities any temptation to do nothing. There was a temptation for the Local Authorities, as the clause was drawn in the Bill, to use the money for the purpose of the rates, and not to embark in any system of buying out licensed houses. It also took away the charge that this compensation would be wrung from the rates imposed upon the people, because it would come from the new fund—a fund belonging in no way to the ratepayer. This was a new tax for the purpose of a new fund, coupled in the Bill with the promise of compensation. If they came to compensate licence holders out of the rates, he very much feared the effect of the agitation which would immediately arise. He thought the ratepayer would be told that it was unjust, in the last degree, to ask him to compensate the holder of any one of these houses. He thought the friction would be immense, and that the result would be that nothing would be done towards diminishing the number of licences. He thought the scheme he had sketched did offer a means, not as rapid as some wished, of reducing without friction the number of licensed houses in the country. It offered, on the other hand, to the trade this consideration—that it would put the extra tax to be placed on them by the Bill in a position where it could only be used for their own compensation. It would not be allowed to go into the common stock. He thought the scheme would also put the trade in this position — that their compensation would be secured. It would put their compensation in a place where it would stand. He was not too confident that if it was placed directly upon the rates in the way proposed by the Bill there might not be some risk at some future time of legislation overtaking them and leaving them without anything at all. He thanked the House very earnestly for giving him its close attention to the dry details of a plan of this sort. He again said to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) that the suggestions he had made to him were made with a view of carrying out what he believed to be the object the right hon. Gentleman had at heart. He had not made them in any sense of complaining of the amount of compensation, or of the vast powers that were given to the County Councils, or of anything of that sort. His object had been, if he possibly could, to suggest something that might reduce the acrimony with which this question had been fought, so long as no compensation was proposed. If they could do anything to remove that acrimony, it would be a very great benefit to both Parties in the House, because the question had assumed proportions that made it overshadow almost every other political question. He believed that if they could remove one of the chief obstacles to a peaceful and self-working solution of the question—a fair compensation coming, not from the the rates, but from the extra tax on the licensed victuallers themselves — they would do much to facilitate the working of the measure, and to achieve that which both sides of the House desired to see —namely, that there should only be so many licensed houses in the country as were really wanted by the people, and that there should be a living for those who were licensed. There were many other topics in the Bill which he should like to have touched upon, but he was too sensible of the indulgence the House had granted him on this subject to weary them at any further length.

MR. MILVAIN (Durham) said, the question of the transference of licensing from the magistrates to the new Licensing Authorities had been so fully dealt with by the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) that it would not be fair in him to occupy the time of the House longer upon that subject, except to say that the principle which had been acted upon for many years was that when a person, whose character was always the subject of inquiry before he obtained a licence, had obtained a licence and invested his money in a public-house, there must be something against his personal character before the renewal of his licence could be refused. He hoped it would not be considered he used a strong term when he said it would be inequitable and unjust were it otherwise; it would certainly be striking a blow at the stability of private property, for which there was no precedent in past legislation. He was glad that the principle of vested interests in licences, other than the licences granted under the Beer House and Retail Wine and Spirit Act of 1869, were about to be recognized in this Bill, which he hoped would become an Act. There was another proposal in the Bill to which not much attention had as yet been paid, and that was the proposal relating to the closing of public-houses upon Good Friday, Christmas Day, and Sunday. He had always been of opinion that the closing of public-houses on Sundays and on holidays would not be attended with the good results the Temperance Party had in view; and he might say at once that in speaking upon this measure he had the same object in view as the Temperance Party themselves—that was to say, the moral welfare of the people. But if public-houses in large boroughs and populous districts were closed on Sundays, did those who advocated the closing of such houses not think, or had they not learnt from experience, that those whom they desired to force by Act of Parliament to be sober would provide themselves on the Saturday night with not only the necessary amount of drink to be consumed on the Sunday, but take care that they procured more than they wanted, and more than they would otherwise drink upon the Sunday? It certainly would not be desirable that there should be private drinking in private houses, if only for the sake of the bad example to wives and children, who might not otherwise be tempted into such evil practices. He thought that, if they might draw or gain any knowledge from experience, that had practically been the result of closing public-houses, where they had been already closed by Act of Parliament, on Sundays. He referred to Wales and to Scotland. He was told that in parts of Scotland there was a notice put up in public-house windows upon the Saturday night to "Remember the Sabbath Day." He was told that in Wales, in order to defeat an unpopular Act, the publicans drove a roaring trade upon the Sunday by not only selling drink at their doors to *bonâ fide* travellers, but also by keeping traps by which they might exchange traffic with their neighbours, and thus constitute people *bonâ fide* travellers. That was the kind of thing which took place in Wales and Scotland. But if they referred to statistics, if statistics were to be relied upon at all, they found that in the boroughs of Wales, where, of course, the greatest amount of Sunday drinking took place, there was as much Sunday drunkenness as there was in similar boroughs in England; and if they turned to similar boroughs in Scotland, they found that the convictions for Sunday drunkenness in Scotland were largely in excess of the convictions for like offences in either England or Wales. He went further, and asserted that if they took the whole of the population of all the boroughs in England, and compared it with the whole of the population of the boroughs in Wales, they would find that the convictions for Sunday drunkenness were practically identical; but if they added the population of Wales and Scotland together, they would find that the convictions for Sunday drunkenness in Wales and Scotland, where Sunday Closing was in operation, were greatly in excess, per 1,000 of the population, of the convictions for Sunday drunkenness in England. But this was purely incidental, and it was, perhaps, not proper for him to mention it; he only did so in view of the provision of the Bill to delegate to County Councils the closing of public-houses within the county or specified parts of the county. In this measure the Government had great difficulties to deal with. They had this difficulty at any rate—that they had succeeded in pleasing neither the Temperance Party nor the licensed victuallers. Speaking for himself, he certainly congratulated the Government on having delegated to the County Authorities this very grave question. It was a grave question, it was one of great importance, and ought to be approached in the most serious manner, affecting, as it undoubtedly did, the vested interests of those who had put their money into the trade and the personal privileges of the people. What would be the effect if the Sunday Closing Question was left in the hands of Parliament? He could not help thinking that Parliament would in time be obliged to pass a Sunday Closing Act if things went on at the present rate. He did not say so because he believed the majority of the people in the country desired it or believed in its desirability, but because candidates were too flabby; they had not got sufficient stamina and backbone to say to those to whom they applied for election what they really thought, or to state what were the Constitutional aspects of this very important question. There was too much of the endeavour to nullify or cancel the influence of the organization, peculiar in itself, as having for its first motive the moral welfare of the people under the name of temperance, but having as its second string a powerful political agency, and that was the reason that, as time went on, if this matter was not delegated to the Local Councils, they would have candidates seeking the representation of the people, and saying, as he regretted to say he had heard them say—"Why should I refuse to accede to the views of a section of the people; it will not hurt me; if they like it, well, then let them have it." He maintained that was an entirely wrong view to take, for reasons with which he would deal presently. Now, what would be the result of delegating this question to Local Councils? He was told by a Petition which he received the other day from some temperance association that it was inadvisable that the question should be delegated to Local Councils, because the Councillors would not be elected upon the direct issue, but upon a general issue. That was exactly his ground for saying that that was practically what happened now in the case of the election of Members of Parliament. If the question were dealt with by Parliament and public-houses were closed by Act of Parliament, what difficulties would have to be encountered in endeavouring to repeal that Act of Parliament? It could not be done. But if this matter were referred to a Local Council to determine, if the first election of Councillors was not upon this direct issue, and if the Council took upon them to either close public-houses or to refuse to renew licences to licensed houses, it might be depended upon that the next election of Councillors, whether it be after three years, or whether it be in pursuance of the principle that one-third of the Councillors should be elected every year, would be conducted upon that direct issue. That was the reason he advised licensed victuallers to readily accept the proposal to delegate this matter to the Local Councils. There was another subject he should like to have recognized in connection with Sunday closing of public-houses. He noticed that, in connection with the authority which was given to the Local Councils to exercise their discretion in refusing to renew licences, an appeal was given from the part affected and from an adjoining licensing division affected by the refusal. Let him point out what would be the effect of closing public-houses in a specified area of the county. Did the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) not think that there ought to be the same facilities of appeal afforded to the area affected by the closing of public-houses and the area adjoining the closed area? It must be perfectly apparent to the House, as well as to the right hon. Gentleman, that if public-houses were closed in a specified area of a county, the outside of that area would be immediately affected by the incursion of those who wished to drink upon Sundays. People would betake themselves from the closed areas to the adjoining areas which were not closed, so he thought the same facilities for appealing to the County Council before public-houses were closed ought to be afforded to the adjoining areas. But there was another question beyond that, and it was a question of compensation. He knew it would be said that if public-houses were closed on Sundays by County Councils, publicans need only take out six-day licences, and thus no compensation would be required. But if that argument was used it was applicable at the present time. Those who wished to act upon Sabbatarian principles could close their public-houses on Sundays and could take out a six-day licence now. The reason why men did not take out six-day licences now was that if they did they would drive their trade away to other public-houses who took out seven-day licences. The recognition in the Bill of the *bonâ fide* traveller would render the same argument applicable to the state of circumstances created by the Bill. Upon the question of compensation for closing public-houses he might quote a very strong example. In 1886 a Bill was passed through the House of Commons closing public-houses on Sundays in the County of Durham. That Bill went up to the House of Lords, and it passed a first and second reading there. After it had passed the second reading in the Upper House, a public-house on the Northumberland side of the Tyne, which had been put up for auction in the previous year, was again put up, and the auctioneer, while engaged in selling the house, commented upon the great advantage that would accrue to the house in consequence of the Durham Sunday Closing Act. The house went up in value, in consequence of the expectation that the Durham Sunday Closing Bill would come into operation, to the extent of between 30 and 40 per cent. He did not think it required a very great mind to grasp the fact that if a house in a non-closed area went up in value to the extent of 30 or 40 per cent, a similar house in a closed area would be depreciated in exactly the same proportion. He thought that while they lived in the luxury of the present day, they entirely forgot the lot of the honest hardworking man. They entirely forgot that he was locked up possibly in his one room, with his wife and his family. They entirely forgot that he possibly might desire occasionally to get away from his house to where he could meet his fellows and converse with them on subjects of mutual interest between them. They entirely forgot that the well-conducted public-house was the club of the working man; and he (Mr. Milvain) thought that if power were given to the County Councils to close public-houses, the same jurisdiction ought to be extended to them to close clubs, whether they were bogus clubs or clubs to which hon. Members of the House of Commons resorted. Numbers of clubs were perfectly certain to spring up the moment public-houses were closed, and he thought if there was one thing more than another which made the law respected and obeyed in this country, it was the equality of its application. What he had maintained, and what he should continue to maintain, was that if the County Councils had not the same power to close the clubs as they had to close the public-houses, the law was inequitable in its application, and there would be a new departure in legislation which had never been recognized or sanctioned before, and that was legislation distinguishing the masses from the classes. He knew there had been legislation of an official nature dealing with the masses in their capacity as workmen, but there had been no legislation of a social nature distinguishing them from the classes. What he wanted to see was equality in the law and equality in the application of the law. He did not wish to say any more. He had always taken an interest in this question of Sunday closing, and the more closely he examined it, the more difficult he felt it to be to deal with it; but he was sure of this, that unless it was dealt with in the equitable spirit he had described, it ought not to be dealt with at all.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I believe I have heard almost everything that has been said during the course of this debate, and in rising to speak for a very short time I think I ought to say that I do not propose to repeat, if I can avoid it, any part of the arguments which have been used by hon. Members on whichever side of the House they may sit. I am anxious to give to the House a few remarks, in which I shall, as far as I can, call attention to certain points in connection with this Bill which have not hitherto been dealt with. I hope on that understanding I may receive the attention of some Members of the House who, like myself, have for many years taken a great deal of interest in this question. There is a remark that fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General to which I think I ought to call attention at the beginning. I do not propose to present any argument on the subject of licensing, either as to the powers proposed to be transferred from the Justices to the Councils, or to those subsidiary questions of which we heard so much during the course of the debate. But I think the House should notice what was elicited by my hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), that is to say, the precise ground upon which the Government rest their proposal for compensation for loss of licences. It is a very interesting question, and, as such, I think the House should clearly understand the ground the Government has taken, because, to a certain extent, it is a new one. The legal technical ground laid down by the Solicitor General is, it would appear, the foundation of the view adopted by the President of the Local Government Board. The ground upon which the Government rest their case for compensation for the loss of licences is mainly a clause in the Act of 1874, which provides that the Justices, in giving notice to a licensee that his attendance is required on the occasion of his applying for the renewal of his licence, shall set forth the cause, personal to him, why the question of the loss of his licence is in debate. Now, that clause was moved by Sir Charles Dilke on the occasion of the Bill of 1874 being reported. It was not in the Bill as introduced by the Government at all, and it must have been based upon grounds of which we have no trace in *Hansard*—where it is only said that Sir Charles Dilke moved to add it to the Bill. I wish merely to point out upon what a very slender foundation the Government, according to the Solicitor General, had been advised to base their compensation proposals. I will now pass away altogether from the question of licensing. There are one or two remarks in connection with what was debated yesterday to which I should here like to refer. The hon. Member the Chairman of Ways and Means, to whose most eloquent and brilliant speech the whole of us attended with the greatest possible interest—though, after all, I do not think, in spite of his eloquence, he persuaded any very large number of the House—rested his objection to the proposed constitution of the Council because they are not to be elected according to a particular machinery which does not prevail in respect to elections to this House. He had urged this plan in the discussion of the last Reform Act, and I do not think from the very small support with which it was received then or has been received since, that it is likely to be popular. Therefore, in dealing with my hon. Friend's present suggestion, I think we may assume that it is outside practical politics. I am very sorry for it. My hon. Friend supported his proposal, as I have said with very great eloquence; but you require to persuade as well as to be eloquent, and I do not think anyone will dispute what I say—namely, that of those who listened to my right hon. Friend only a very small proportion were persuaded by the arguments he laid before us. But there was another speech yesterday to which I feel bound to refer. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) followed my hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means, and in the course of his speech he brought forward some very cogent arguments against certain of the proposals of the present Bill. But what I could not understand was what gadfly stung my right hon. Friend so that he should have felt it to be his duty to introduce into the discussion what every hon. Member up to this time on either side of the House had been careful to avoid—namely, irritating Party politics having nothing whatever to do with the present Bill. My right hon. Friend may have had his own reasons for introducing that language; but I think the House will agree with me that there is nothing as to which the Government feel more anxious, as to which this Bench has been more anxious, and as to which the whole House has been more anxious, than that this question should be discussed, if possible, altogether outside ordinary Party politics and considerations, and that each clause, each proposal, should stand or fall on its own merits. My right hon. Friend felt it to be his duty—and I am sorry to see he is not here at this moment—in the course of his remarks to give us a piece of history. He said—

> "Three years ago it was my duty to prepare a Bill upon this subject. It was never completed or submitted to the House, because the Government of the day thought it right to throw aside that measure, with all the other items of the programme upon which they had been elected, in order to take up a new programme upon which the country had not been consulted."

Well, my right hon. Friend, I presume, alluded to the Bill which he prepared, or which he found prepared, and which he, to some extent, altered in 1886—the Bill which was practically prepared by Sir Charles Dilke and other Members (myself included) of the Cabinet in 1885, and which my right hon. Friend found in the pigeon holes of the Local Government Board. But what was the position of my right hon. Friend in 1886? He had joined a Government the object of which was in the most formal manner declared to be to seek a solution of the Home Rule Question other than coercion. That was the object for which my right hon. Friend joined the Government of the day, and I cannot conceive why he should have suggested as he did yesterday, that his Bill was to have been the main Bill of the Session, but that it was pushed aside for another on the subject of Ireland. But I will venture to quote a sentence from a very well known speech by a Member whose authority he will not dispute, which exactly shows which was considered the more important measure between English County Government and Irish Home Rule, and the one to be brought forward first. The words are these:—

> "The question of the extension of Local Government is another subject which is even of greater importance. It is a National question as well as a parochial question; and the pacification of Ireland depends on the concession to Ireland of the right to govern itself in the matter of its purely domestic business."

Now, that I take from a speech on the subject of Local Government, delivered by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) himself, on, I think, the 17th of June, 1885; so that, if it is necessary to answer the remark of my hon. Friend that his Bill was put aside, I answer him in his own words, whether he adheres to them or not at the present time. But, passing from those two speeches, I think the House will agree with me in this, that there is no measure of greater magnitude that either has been or can be proposed to Parliament at the present time than this Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. Not very long ago—I think in the year 1884—I ventured to say, on the approaching introduction of the Bills for reducing the County Franchise and for the redistribution of representation, that those two measures, taken in connection with the Bill which must follow for establishing Local Government upon a popular basis, would form together the greatest administrative and representative change which had taken place in England since 1688. I was very much attacked for that language, and I was told that I was representing the policy of the then Government, or those that might succeed them, in introducing these measures, as a revolutionary policy. Well, Sir, have we not heard during the course of the present debate from the Friends of the Bill themselves that this measure is introducing a great revolution? I think we may take it for granted that, however much some parts of this Bill may be approved of here or approved of there, or disapproved of here and disapproved of there, the Bill, as a whole, will enact a greater reform and a more revolutionary change in our local administration than any measure which has been brought forward for years past or which has ever been likely to receive the approval of this House. Under these circumstances, what, to my mind, is of the first importance is that if we are going to make so great a change as this—a change which even its own authors say is revolutionary—we ought to spare no effort to do it thoroughly. It is of no use at all making a great change of this sort if we leave half of the work undone. That never has been the policy of wise legislators when so enormous a transformation of powers and authority has been brought before the Legislature. Sir, what happens if you do not make the thing thorough? There is no doubt of this, that public attention does not remain fixed upon a particular political subject for any great length of time. As it is, it has taken us 25 years to reach the point of the introduction of this Bill since the question of Local Government began to be agitated in Parliament and the country. I think I am right in saying that it was about 1862 or 1863 that the question first became prominent in the public mind; so that we have taken 25 years to get the question up to the point of a Government—a strong Government—making proposals on the subject. I think that if we let the occasion pass now for making the measure as complete as the time of Parliament during this Session will allow, we shall have the further consequential charges also of great magnitude relegated to some uncertain period; and probably we shall have to wait another 25 years before the measure is made perfect. Let me give the House an illustration of what I mean. I remember something like 17 or 18 years ago there was a great agitation in the country in favour of the reform of our military and naval system. That agitation reached its height about the year 1869 or 1870; and very great changes were made in our military and naval system—changes of great importance, changes very much resisted at the time, but which were carried through the influence of a strong Government. They were, however, far from perfect, and much more was required in the same direction. Now, I say that from that time till two years ago it was impossible in this House to obtain any attention to the question of Army and Navy reform. I had the duty for some years of being responsible to this House for the Army; and what are the facts? Why, that except upon questions of vested interests the House would not attend to any proposals for Army reform, and practically the same statement might be made with respect to naval reform. Fortunately, these subjects are now well to the front, and with the assistance of Committees and Royal Commissions now sitting, a great deal of good will, I hope, be done. But it is perfectly clear that, unless you take advantage of public feeling being strongly in the direction of some great change like this, and unless, whilst you are about it, you carry out that change thoroughly, next year or the year after the whole matter will be forgotten, and it will be impossible to get up the steam of imaginative expression, so as to carry further changes. This has been the policy of our great neighbour, France, in connection with this particular subject of Local Government. I do not know whether the House is aware that for some years during the present century, and up to the time of the Franco-German War, the state of affairs as regarded Local Government in France wanted reforming—a great deal has been left undone. After 1870 an opportunity for carrying out great changes, however, occurred, and chiefly under the guidance of M. Waddington, who is now the French Ambassador in this country, the whole question of French Local Government received a most thorough sifting and inquiry, and a great measure was passed reforming it in all its details—a more comprehensive and elaborate measure even than the one now before this House. The whole Local Government of France, whatever this party or that party may say of any particular provision, was put into a thoroughly satisfactory state. I do hope, therefore, that we shall not leave the thing alone now, and that, so far as we can go on the basis of the present Bill, we shall do our best to make the measure complete, and not trust to future Sessions and Acts of Parliament for doing so. May I say a word or two as to the changes which, I think, ought to be introduced now? A good deal has been said about the impossibility of dealing with the parish in this Bill, and, of course, of dealing with the Union, which consists of a number of parishes. I am ready to admit that the difficulties with respect to parishes are very great, and that there are a great number of parishes that would have to be combined or dealt with in some such way if we take in hand a thorough reform of the parish divisions and of the parish functions. And so with respect to Poor Law Union. But I would make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, which I think, perhaps, would be of some value. He has got now before him, or will have in a short time, the Report of the Boundary Commissioners; at any rate, he will have all of them before the end of the Session. When he has these Reports he will be possessed of the greater part of the materials for re-arranging the Union boundaries, which present, no doubt, one of the great difficulties of this matter. Now, what I would suggest to him is this, that in the present Bill he should insert what would not be a very long or a very difficult clause, a clause not merely enabling but requiring the new Councils within a certain time—probably six or nine months would be sufficient after they have got into working order—to prepare schemes for the re-arrangement of the Poor Law Unions upon the basis of the District Council Divisions which will be created under this Bill. In some cases the Unions would be coterminous with the Council districts, and, in some cases, they would embrace two or more Council districts. There may be cases where the district should be divided, though outside the Metropolis I am not sure that there would be many; but if the right hon. Gentleman would introduce a clause requiring the County Council to deal with this re-division within a limited time, the back of the difficulty would be broken. There should be two additional provisions, one that where Unions overlap county boundaries, the two Councils should be compelled to confer and to act; the other, that if they fail or neglect their duty, it should be the province of the Local Government Board to perform it for them. The result would be that we should have within a reasonable time complete schemes for bringing the Poor Law machinery into harmony with the new county machinery, and upon these complete schemes the Government would be able to act. I hope I have made myself clear to the right hon. Gentleman. Well, that appears to be one of the omissions in the Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE was understood to observe that provision was made for the point referred to in the Bill.

Mr. CHILDERS: The right hon. Gentleman says that these powers are to be granted; but they should be obligations as well as powers imposed upon County Councils by Statute, and not left to the option or caprice of each county. Then, with regard to education, I quite agree that it would have been impossible to have brought the school districts in every case within the provisions of this Bill—I mean the school board districts. That was out of the question; but I think it is very much to be regretted that directly and absolutely under this Bill the charge of intermediate education should not be given to the County Councils, and also that the County Councils are not given by the Bill responsibility for supervising the school boards, instead of leaving them, as they were now, directly under the control of the Education Committee of the Privy Council. I know there is a power in the Bill under which certain official duties can be transferred to the County Councils; but I think we ought to have gone further than that, and that the Bill should lay down distinctly what function should be transferred from the Central Departments. The thing, I think, might have been done easily, and by not more than two or three clauses in the Bill. Then there is another fault in the arrangements of the Bill, to which I think the right hon. Gentleman has already had his attention called. The right hon. Gentleman proposed originally that only a limited number of counties of towns should be created by the Bill—towns, most of them, of 200,000 or 300,000 population. I understand, though I do not think he stated it, and therefore I may be wrong, that he is going now to fix the limit at 100,000 inhabitants—that he proposes that all boroughs of 100,000 inhabitants should be counties for the purposes of this Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE: A hundred thousand in 1881.

Mr. CHILDERS: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to put the limit lower. One hundred thousand is too high. You will choke the municipal life of a great portion of this country if you leave many flourishing towns of less than 100,000 inhabitants in *quasi*-subservience to the counties. I would, therefore, strongly urge the right hon. Gentleman to see whether he cannot find a line very much lower than 100,000. My own suggestion would be more like 40,000. Thus he should get over that other difficulty as to licensing in boroughs which he explained to the House today, but as to which I am afraid, unless something of the kind is done, there will be still greater complications than he has now, depending on the accident whether in the County Council the borough has six representatives or not. On the subject of the control of the police, I heard with great regret, with many other hon. Members last night, the sentence in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman when, in answer to an appeal to retain over the police the authority of the magistrates, he used these words, which I took down at the time—

> "By giving the appointment of the Chief Constable to the magistrates, we give them practically control over the police."

But that is exactly what the House does not want; it does not want the magistrates to have practical control over the police. The magistrates' duties in connection with keeping order directly in connection with the police are understood. They work well in the boroughs, and do not clash with the absolute control over the force exercised by the Watch Committees; and, so far as I know, there is no reason whatever why this difference should be made between the boroughs and the counties. I hope, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman will withdraw the doctrine he laid down last night. I should have liked to have said a few words on the financial question between the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board and my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler); but I have not time to go into the detailed figures. But I understand the question to be simply this, that while the President of the Local Government Board does not contest my right hon. Friend's general classification of local taxation, what he does is to criticize the figures which my right hon. Friend produced, and he lays special stress on the fact that during the last 10 years a certain number of rural districts have come to be classed as the intermediate districts.

Mr. RITCHIE: Not intermediate, but urban districts.

Mr. CHILDERS: I understood the right hon. Gentleman last night to say intermediate. However, I will take urban districts. The right hon. Gentleman does not controvert my right hon. Friend's figures.

Mr. RITCHIE: I said the statement I made entirely upset the comparison of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. CHILDERS: Surely he did not dispute the figures themselves.

Mr. RITCHIE: I controverted the force of the comparison.

Mr. CHILDERS: The right hon. Gentleman's object was to throw doubt upon my right hon. Friend's figures, and he endeavoured to correct them so as to bring them into harmony with his own.

Mr. RITCHIE: I never said anything about bringing his figures into harmony with my own. I did not advance figures as against those of the right hon. Gentleman. All I stated was, that when he gave figures to the House showing what the increase of the urban rates had been during the last 10 years, as compared with the increase of the rural rates, he omitted to mention that a large number of urban districts had been carved out of rural districts.

Mr. CHILDERS: That is precisely what I understood, but I did not, perhaps, express it as clearly as the right hon. Gentleman has done. But the amount in dispute is not large, and when we go into Committee we shall have an opportunity, now that we have the right hon. Gentleman's figures and the figures of my right hon. Friend before us, of more fully discussing this important matter. All I would say at the present moment is that it will be a very important matter in Committee to see whether, under the plan of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in counties which contain a number of small boroughs as well as a large number of rural districts, the distribution of the funds in future at the disposal of the Local Authorities is not too favourable to the county at the expense of urban districts. I will say no more than that it is a question which has to be threshed out in Committee. Before I sit down, I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could hear what I have to say as to the general financial construction of the Bill. What I understand as the financial plan of which the Bill and the Budget scheme are the expressions, is that in the present financial year, the County Authorities are to receive from the Exchequer £1,150,000 — that is to say, four-sixths of one-third of the Probate Duties, and they are to receive from new local licences £826,000, making altogether £1,976,000, the present subventions being left intact.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to correct him? There is the subvention to the roads to be considered.

Mr. CHILDERS: I am allowing for that. Next year the position will be this. The County Authorities are to receive from the Exchequer one-half of the Probate Duties—£1,800,000—and from the new licences, £826,000. From old licences they will recive £2,970,000, less subsidies £2,582,000, and the total effect of that will be that they will receive more than they do at present by, in round numbers, £3,000,000. The effect on the Exchequer will be a loss this year of something more than £1,150,000, and in future years £2,188,000. Well, Sir, how is it proposed to meet this draft on the Exchequer? There are two things which my right hon. Friend proposes to do; and I am only going to state the facts, not to argue whether his proposals are wise or not. He has to provide for the contribution which goes from the Exchequer to the Local Authorities, and he has also another object, which is to take off 1*d.* from the Income Tax; and he has bound up these two objects together in this way. He proposes to levy new taxes for the Exchequer to the extent of £585,000, and more local licences amounting to £826,000—altogether to add to the local and Imperial taxation, £1,411,000. But he takes off £1,550,000 through the remission of the Income Tax. I think I have stated that quite accurately. Now, if that is the case, if the proposal in connection with the local Budget and the Imperial Budget is to add further taxes—local and general—to the extent of £1,411,000, and to take 1*d.* in the pound from the

Income Tax, at a cost of £1,550,000, with the prospect next year of a far greater burden on the Exchequer, would it not be far better to leave matters as they stand, abandoning altogether both the new local and Imperial taxes, not disturbing the Income Tax, with precisely the same result? I am not going to argue as to the policy of each individual tax which my right hon. Friend proposes to put on in order to realize the amount which his reduction of the Income Tax renders necessary, but as to the new local licences, I think my right hon. Friend himself is by this time aware that they are extremely unpopular, and will meet with very stout resistance. The Horse Tax, I would remind him, was abandoned by Sir Stafford Northcote because the exemptions were so great that it was impossible satisfactorily to collect the tax, and yet my right hon. Friend is going to impose it with still greater exemption than those which existed when Sir Stafford Northcote abolished it. And with regard to the proposed Cart and Wheel Tax, almost every day produces some new modification, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade promises to a deputation or announces to the House. I am very much afraid that when these taxes come to be discussed in Parliament it will be extremely difficult to lay down either with respect to the Horse Tax, with respect to the Waggon Tax, or with respect to the Wheel Tax, a system which will not be so full of exemptions and anomalies that it will be practically unworkable. Now, let me repeat again what I said just now. I said you will not find it necessary to raise any new taxes if you leave the Income Tax alone. Why not give the Local Authorities, instead of £826,000 in the shape of obnoxious new local taxes, as you propose to give them, an equivalent amount from the House Duty, say, one-half, or more precisely four-ninths, which would reach £840,000? This transfer and the non-enactment of the additional Wine Duty and stamps and other imports, will be just met by not taking 1*d.* off the Income Tax. I would suggest that for the consideration of the Government. Of course, this is not the time for debating in detail any change of this kind which affects mainly the Budget proposals; but, so far as local taxes are concerned, I would only repeat that I greatly deplore these additions to the charges on locomotion, just after they have been one by one abandoned; and if there ever was a time when the warning "Why cannot you let it alone?" was applicable, was the present.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Firth,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday.*

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present:—

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES (PENSIONS) BILL.—[BILL 92.]

(*Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Godson, Mr. Hastings.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 37; Noes 44: Majority 7.—(Div. List, No. 72.)

ARCHITECTS' REGISTRATION BILL.

(*Colonel Duncan, Captain Penton, Mr. Murphy, General Goldsworthy, Colonel Makins.*)

[BILL 81.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) said, the object of the Bill, the second reading of which he was about to move, was very simple. There was nothing at present to prevent a man calling himself an architect, surveyor, or engineer; while the public had no means whatever which would enable them to distinguish between those who were competent and qualified persons and those who were not. The promoters of the Bill desired to afford facility for distinguishing between men who had been trained to the profession of architects, civil engineers, and surveyors, and those who had not received such training. There were many difficulties to be encountered in effecting this—in the first place, there were the rights of many professional men which had to be considered; and, secondly, there was the very strong opposition which any new measure had to encounter. If he could put before the House the numerous objections to the Bill which had reached him, it would be found that they all answered one another. He had received letters telling him that the Bill was for the purpose of making architecture, engineering, and surveying close corporations; others said that its object was to make those professions open to the most inefficient practitioners. Most of the objections to the provisions of the Bill were matters which could be considered and met in Committee. There were eminent Bodies in the country which were fitted for conducting, under the Privy Council, an examination into the capabilities of persons for these professions, but at present there was no compulsory power in those Bodies. This power the Bill proposed to give them. At the present time there were many sanitary questions to be dealt with, but those questions could not be treated by ignorant men. The Legislature had taken care, by many enactments, that medical examinations should take place, and if other classes of professional men were compelled to be registered, he did not see why that rule should not be applied to those who belonged to the professions which were the subject of this Bill. He found that a sentimental objection was urged against the proposal — namely, that architecture was a mystic art, and that the ability of a man in that department could not be tested. But the same objection might be urged in the case of medical men. It could not be denied that a large amount of useful knowledge would be obtained by the proposed examinations, and that the public would be gainers in future by securing the safety which would result from those examinations. The desire of those who promoted this measure was simply the elevation of these professions and the protection of the public. He would conclude by moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Colonel Duncan.*)

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, as a member of the Medical Profession, he had had some experience of registration in that profession, and he would ask the House not to come to any premature decision upon the Bill. There was no kind of comparison between the Bodies with respect to which the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Duncan) had sought to establish an analogy. In the case of the Medical Profession, they had a homogeneous body developing itself until the time was ripe for the practitioners to be grouped together. The professions dealt with in the Bill appeared to him to be heterogeneous, and he was not prepared to see all those Bodies grouped in one Bill in order to establish an association of architects, engineers, and surveyors. He agreed that some steps should be taken for making architects more acquainted with sanitary matters, but he did not think that the Bill offered adequate means of arriving at that desirable end. He, therefore, urged the House to consider the matter further before agreeing to the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member.

Mr. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he joined the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken in opposing this Bill. He objected to placing these three Professions on the same footing as the Medical Profession. At present, it was open to anybody who had talent and skill to practice in these Professions without having the opportunity of doing any serious harm. The employment given to the three Professions came, as a rule, from boards and business corporations, who knew their interest well enough to get the best men to do the work. It was only natural and necessary that precautions should be taken in the case of the Medical Profession, to the members of which men's lives were entrusted, and accordingly the public were entitled to every security that Universities and educating Bodies could afford, by ensuring that the members of the Profession should practice with efficiency and skill; but in the case of engineers, surveyors, and architects, the matter was entirely different. The institutes of civil engineers, surveyors, and architects were entirely against the Bill. They considered it a most invidious and entirely unnecessary measure. For those reasons, he hoped that the Division would be taken at once, and that the Motion for the second reading would be promptly defeated.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) said, he rose to support the Bill for the very reason which had induced his hon.

Friend (Mr. Gill) to oppose it. His hon. Friend seemed to think that this Bill was put forward in an exclusive sense, but he (Mr. Murphy) considered it rather an enfranchising Bill than otherwise. Its only opponents were the members of three very exclusive and select Bodies, who had their head quarters in London. There were, however, a great many admirable associations in other parts of the country, and in Dublin there was the Society of Engineers and Architects, who were in favour of the Bill. No doubt the London societies had great weight all the world over; but, as he had said, they were very exclusive, and it was to put an end to those close boroughs that the Bill was designed. He hoped the House would assent to the second reading, and if it were thought desirable, he would, for his part, be willing that, in Committee, the Bill should be made permissive.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, that Clause 21 provided that after the 1st of January, 1889, no person should be entitled to take the name of architect, civil engineer, or surveyor unless he had registered under this Act. Now, that seemed to him to be introducing a proposition of the gravest kind, and he had not heard any adequate reason that evening in support of the measure, which must press harshly and severely upon a large class of persons. He thought also they should have the view of the Government on this subject, and perhaps the best course, under the circumstances, would be that the Debate should be adjourned.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, he thought that anybody acquainted with the Professions intended to come within the scope of this Bill must feel that there was no real necessity for the measure, which, while it imposed restrictions on those who practised in the Professions, did not meet the evils of which the hon. and gallant Member had complained. He would only speak for the Society of Civil Engineers, and he asked the House to consider what had been the result of the works carried out by them during the last 50 years. No one would say that there had been any defects in the work which the civil engineers had performed during that period, or that the Profession had not been practised in a way satisfactory to the country. They had spent a large sum of money in the promotion of the science of engineering, and he thought it was a monstrous thing to say that men who were members of that body should not be allowed to practise unless they registered. Then, again, no doubt there were various views with regard to architecture; but in this case also, during the last 50 years, the practice of architecture had enormously improved, and he submitted that those who supported the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Duncan) should show where was the necessity for this Bill, in what respect the Profession had failed, and how it was proposed to establish the examining Body, with regard to which there were no particulars or details given. Again, hon. Members knew perfectly well that during the last 13 or 14 years examinations were held for the purpose of testing surveyors and granting diplomas and certificates and for proficiency in sanitary science and such matters as were necessary for those who practised that profession. And, again, he said that if the Bill was to be passed, they would require some explanation from the hon. and gallant Gentleman and his Supporters as to the parts of the country where these examinations would be required. The House would understand that, having taken a great interest in these Professions for many years, he (Sir Richard Webster) would be the first to advocate that there should be efficiency in architecture, surveying, and engineering; but having had a large acquaintance with members of the Professions concerned, having carefully considered the Bill, and not being influenced by anything except his own knowledge, he thought that this was a measure which the House ought not to pass without it was fully explained in what manner the evils alluded to were intended to be met.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, his experience was rather a sad one in this particular—namely, that some years ago he had advertised for an engineer at a salary of £300, and failed to hear of one who was sufficiently familiar with logarithms to calculate the proper weight for a fly-wheel. He fully sympathized with the object of the Bill introduced by the hon. and gallant Gentleman, but, nevertheless, could not support it, for the reason that, as it seemed to him, there was no guarantee in it for a thoroughly sound education, nor did the council which was to confer degrees appear to be properly constituted. He trusted, however, that hon. Members who had thought over the Bill would consider that better education for members of these Professions was very difficult to obtain in England, and he thought it a disgrace to the country that that should be so.

Mr. GILES (Southampton) said, he would appeal to the Members of the House as to whether the engineers who had carried out tremendous works in all parts of the world should be placed in the position contemplated by the Bill. He failed to see why the 5,530 members of that Profession should be so treated, and he would point out that although the Bill was nominally for the protection of the public against incompetency, its object was very different. If hon. Members would look at Schedule A, it would be seen that the members of 23 societies were to be pitchforked into the Professions. The three leading Institutes of Engineers, Architects, and Surveyors had petitioned against the Bill. He was bound to say that its promoters were particularly patronizing, for they said that the Charter of the Institute of Engineers, now some 60 years old, was to be confirmed by them. The members of the Institute were very much obliged to them for this consideration; but they did not want the irresponsible authors of the Bill to confirm this Charter. He considered that engineers had done more than any other Profession to increase the civilization of the world. To what had been done in railways, steamships, electricity, and other branches of engineering, the great names of Stephenson, Brunel, Armstrong, and Siemens testified, and their works were the monuments of their greatness. The members of these Professions claimed higher ground than that assigned to them by the promoters of the Bill; and, if for no other reason, he trusted the House would reject the Bill.

Mr. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, on behalf of the body of architects he ventured to think that a more uncalled-for measure than the present could not well be conceived. While he recognized his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Duncan) as a great authority upon guns of all descriptions, he could not consider him an equal authority on the particular subject with which he had associated his name. He was aware that there was a feeling abroad that the architect of the present day was not up to the requirements necessary with respect to the sanitation of houses; but he begged to point out that, in that matter, it was not so much the architects who were at fault as the jerry-builders, and that if the Bill were passed to-morrow, they would still have to guard against the latter. As was well known, the Royal Institute of Architects and the Architectural Association had long held the foremost place in the estimation of the profession and of the public; but a third society had been created within the last few years, and it had occurred to that Society that some ready means should be found for making it compulsory that architects should be registered. The Bill would not, in his opinion, effect any practical advance in the Profession of architecture. It was proposed that all the members of the various Societies should be entitled to be registered; and when he said that some of those Societies were, so to speak, of mushroom growth, the House would be able to come to a conclusion as to the merits of the members of those Societies in regard to the privilege which this Bill proposed to give them. If it were necessary to have a controlling body over the education of those who would practise the Profession in future, they should call to their aid a Society respectable as to its age and reputation, which possessed a Royal Charter, and which numbered amongst its members some of the leading architects of the day, rather than place themselves in the hands of a Society established only three years ago. If, then, it was unnecessary that such a Bill should be passed with regard to the Profession of Architecture, it was nothing short of an impertinence to seek to control the Profession of Civil Engineers by this Bill. He therefore hoped that the House would say there should be no legislation in this direction, and that the Bill would be unanimously rejected.

Mr. BEADEL (Essex, Chelmsford) said, as he had the honour to be President of the Surveyors' Institution, he wished to say a few words on this Motion. The provisions of the Bill constituted an attack upon the influence for good which the Surveyors' Institution, incorporated by Royal Charter, exercised. The Bill was also an attack upon the Royal Society of Engineers and the Royal Society of British Architects. He thought the House would be careful in allowing a Bill to pass the second reading the purport of which was to do that which his hon. and gallant Friend, in his own Profession, would be the very last to countenance—namely, to allow those who had not gone through the necessary ordeal of passing through those Institutions for the purpose of getting the stamp of ability placed upon them, to arrive at a position which would enable them to compete with those who had passed that ordeal to place a brass plate upon their doors and style themselves engineers, architects, and surveyors. If such a measure were proposed in the case of the Army, no one would use more influence than his hon. and gallant Friend to prevent it becoming law. When it was considered that the members of the three Institutions attacked numbered rather more than 10,000, and that, as he was advised, pressure had been put upon many persons to induce them to sign the Petitions which had been presented to the House, he thought hon. Members would hesitate to allow the Bill to be read a second time. The House should bear in mind that to pass the Bill would be to throw odium upon Institutions which had stood the test of time. If it were the pleasure of the House, there would be no difficulty whatever in having registration; but did any Member suppose that by giving a man the opportunity of describing himself upon his brass plate as a registered practitioner he would be capable of holding a position in any one of the three Societies in question? Or would anyone who had a house to build, or a large work to execute, think the brass plate a sufficient reason for employing the man who displayed it as his surveyor? Every prudent person ascertained the qualifications of the medical man he was going to consult; and those who opposed this Bill asked that the stamp of ability should not be placed on those who had not shown that they were entitled to it by the exercise of industry and by having passed the necessary ordeal, as was the case with the members of the Institution which he represented. He could not believe that the House would sanction the principle of the Bill; and, for the reasons stated, he trusted that the Motion for its second reading would not be agreed to.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, that the Bill was drawn exactly according to the Act which he had the honour of passing through the House in relation to the Medical Profession when the Liberals were last in power. But the House should recollect the circumstances under which that Bill was passed. The Medical Profession was a homogeneous Profession, so far as regarded the subjects which it had to undertake. It was not easy to reform the Medical Profession; and it was only after great care and consultation with all the examining Bodies and the practitioners that he was able to get sufficient support to pass such an Act. The Bill now before the House was framed on exactly the same principle—that was to say, there were certain qualified Bodies who were to go upon the general council. Then there were to be certain representative members elected for the three parts of the Kingdom. But who were the constituents in this case? There were no regularly qualified and registered people who could become electors at the present moment. They were to be constituted by the Bill. In the case of the Medical Profession the practitioners had been registered for many years, and they could properly form a constituency. But here it was proposed by the Bill to create a constituency, and a constituency, too, which was very unwilling to be created. The architects and engineers and surveyors were not at present identical; and the House could not in justice pass a Bill which met with so much opposition as this Bill did, and which was not founded upon the same conditions which enabled the House to pass the Bill relating to the Medical Profession.

COLONEL DUNCAN said, he had listened to all that had been said by hon. Members against the Bill, but he could not help feeling that a good deal had been gained by drawing public attention to the subject.

MR. SPEAKER: I would point out that the hon. and gallant Member has no right of reply on an Order of the Day.

COLONEL DUNCAN asked for leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Bill *withdrawn.*

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS BILL.

(*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham* (*Glamorgan*), *Mr. Pickard, Mr. Arthur Acland.*)

[BILL 137.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that the second reading of this Bill ought not to pass without some statement being made with regard to it. The Bill proposed that they should take a distinct step forward—a step which the House had not hitherto thought proper to take. It proposed that, in future, no one should have charge of a boiler or steam engine who had not received a certificate from the Board of Trade. This question had arisen last year in connection with collieries, and had met with a certain amount of discussion; but the House had decided, upon what he considered to be weighty arguments, that it was not desirable to introduce such a provision as was here proposed. He did not, by any means, say that no larger supervision than now existed ought to be had over steam boilers; but, at the same time, he thought they were entitled to say that the accidents arising from improper management were so few that they might assume that, generally speaking, proper care was exercised in the management of engines and boilers. Articles of that kind might be divided into two classes—namely, those which belonged to large and that which belonged to small works. He thought it must be admitted that in every properly conducted large manufactory it was the interest of the proprietors to see that the boilers were properly managed, because the loss arising from bad management altogether outweighed any small difference there might be between the wages of skilled and unskilled persons, and, therefore, in the case of large works, he was certainly of opinion that the Bill was unnecessary. With regard to the smaller works, he would like to know what reason there was to suppose that any certificate from the Board of Trade, or any similar body, would bring about a greater amount of care than was now exercised? It generally happened, where an accident occurred, that it was not so much from want of knowledge as from want of care, and he did not understand how a certificate could show whether a person was fit to be trusted in that respect. He was not speaking at random, because he had in his mind one or two cases which had come to his knowledge within the last year or two. In the case of one accident, the man who had had the management of an engine for years was perfectly competent and would have passed any examination; but one day he came to his work in a state of intoxication, turned a handle the wrong way, and an accident was the result. That case, to his mind, showed how utterly inadequate a certificate of the Board of Trade would be to give any guarantee of character necessary for the management of an engine. With regard to boilers, he knew of a case the other day in which a boiler had been used for some time; there were no less than three persons more or less in charge, any one of whom would have passed any examination that the Board of Trade would prescribe. It happened that a slight injury occurred to the boiler, and it was then found that there was another defect which a proper examination would have shown to exist. These were typical instances showing the futility of a test by examination. This subject had been, from time to time, he believed, under the consideration of the Government, and it had been found extremely difficult to deal with it; therefore, he considered that he might fairly ask that the House should not support the second reading of the Bill, until it was shown that it would bring about greater safety than was now secured.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, that the passing of the Bill would not, as had been suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), lead to the wholesale discharge of men now in charge of engines and boilers unless they passed an examination. The examination which was proposed by the Bill was a very simple one, and every person in charge of an engine ought to be able to pass it. Discharges would not follow upon the passing of the Bill, because the 5th clause of the Bill provided that no man should be required to pass an examination if he had been in charge of a steam engine or boiler for the time of two years. Full protection was therefore given to men now in employment, and every effort made to disturb existing arrangements as little as possible. He was glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) present, because he would be able, no doubt, to inform the House, if it was necessary, that good results had followed upon the examination of men in charge of marine engines and boilers. The noble Lord the ex-President of the Board of Trade (Lord Stanley of Preston), speaking in "another place" last Session, on a kindred proposal to the one of his (Mr. Broadhurst's) hon. Friend, gave some important figures as to the good that had resulted from the examination of marine engineers; and he showed that since marine engineers had been required to pass examinations, and to obtain certificates from the Board of Trade, the loss of life from explosions at sea had almost altogether ceased. The hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) asked what good was to follow this examination. Every good. They had the best of evidence that the greatest possible good—a large saving of property, and, what was still more important, great protection of life—had been consequent upon the examination imposed upon marine engineers by the Board of Trade. He presumed that every Member of the House knew that no marine engineer was allowed to take charge of a vessel unless he had obtained a certificate of competency from the Board of Trade. If it was necessary that the engineers even of small vessels should obtain certificates, how much more necessary was it in the case of our crowded towns, where boilers were found every few yards distant, many of them old and patched up and driven by most incompetent men. Whatever his hon. Friend (Mr. Fenwick) had in his mind in proposing the Bill, he knew what the Committee who prepared the Bill had in their minds. The Committee of the Trades Congress, of which he had the honour to be secretary, had in their minds the important fact that every year there were numbers of accidents, resulting in great injury to limb, and often in loss of life, through overwinding and incompetent supervision of colliery engines. This Bill was a strictly Conservative Bill. It sought to do no one a harm. It did not seek to disturb any trade, to advance any private interest; but its whole object was the protection of property and the protection of life. He claimed the support of every thoughtful Member of the House for the second reading of the Bill. Might he recall to the House the fact that on the last occasion on which they had a thorough debate on this subject—he was not then a Member of the House, but he was under the Gallery, and he remembered the debate as though he took part in it—a distinguished Predecessor of the Home Secretary, who was now Lord Cross, but who was then Home Secretary, took part in the debate. He remembered perfectly well that Lord Cross said that boilers had a language, if not like the language of human beings, yet as unfailing and as unerring in its indications, and that they only required a competent person to be in attendance upon them to understand the language of a boiler, and to be able to take such precautions that would prevent an explosion, and thereby prevent great destruction of life and property. There could be no stronger argument in favour of the second reading of this Bill than the speech of Lord Cross if there had been time to reproduce it. He was persuaded that the reproduction of that speech would have been sufficient in itself to carry the second reading of the Bill. But curiously enough the noble Lord, after making such a good speech, failed to support the Motion to which he spoke. He was only like many of his Colleagues and political Friends, who often made good speeches, but gave bad votes. Sometimes they gave very good votes, and made very bad speeches. Members on both sides of the House, however, were guilty of such failings. But he asked the attention of the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) for a moment, because this was a very important matter, and could not be disposed of lightly. The safety of hundreds of lives depended upon this or some similar protection being afforded. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would only consent to support the second reading of the Bill to-night, and to vote for it, if necessary, he (Mr. Broadhurst) would guarantee that to-morrow the right hon. Gentleman's permanent officials at the

Board of Trade would show him evidence of the most conclusive character to justify him and his Government in supporting the Bill. Let the right hon. Gentleman refer to the Reports made to the Board of Trade by the Departmental officers on the causes of explosions of boilers, and especially as to the number of explosions that had taken place in the case of boilers of traction engines. Why only a few years back, an explosion took place at Maidstone. He was speaking now, like the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), without his brief; but he had read on more occasions than one, that in that case some lives were lost and much injury was done, and that the coroner's verdict amounted in short to this—that the explosion and the consequent loss of life and loss of property would not have taken place had the man in charge of the engine been a competent and skilled man and fit for the important duty entrusted to him. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would look up the Reports, he would find one concerning the running away and explosion of a traction engine some years ago at Rochester or somewhere in the neighbourhood. There was a celebrated manufactory of traction engines in the neighbourhood of Rochester, and if he remembered rightly the manufacturer of those engines gave evidence as to the cause of the accident, and confirmed the opinion that some legislation of this kind was necessary. In the case of one explosion which took place, it was found that a very economical driver, wishing to get all he could out of the engine with as little expenditure of coal as possible, had wedged down the safety valve with a brick. If this moderate and reasonable proposal, which no man ought to say a word against, had been in operation during the last 10 years, scores, if not hundreds, of lives would have been saved, many children would not have been left fatherless, and much destruction of property would have been prevented. Those were reasons which led him to support this Bill. He wished it, however, to be understood that he spoke entirely for himself. He must not be supposed to represent in any way whatever the opinions of his Colleagues upon the Opposition Bench, but he spoke as an independent Member. He sincerely trusted that the Government were, at any rate, agreed as to the second reading of the Bill, and he had no doubt that his hon. Friend in charge of the measure would after the second reading had been carried, be ready to consult with the Board of Trade as to any Amendments which it might be thought necessary to insert in the Bill in Committee. Let them distinguish this night, extraordinary as it had been, in legislative incidents, as one night in the Session when the House resolved to do its utmost to protect the lives of our great labouring community as far as they could by the adoption of reasonable proposals of this nature. He had great pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, that the boilers which predominated in country districts were of no danger whatever to anyone, and in legislating upon this question such a fact ought not to be forgotten. If they were to impose the proposed restrictions on the ordinary farmer, they would simply prevent him using steam on his farm in the same manner that he did at present. They knew that in many agricultural occupations, such as dairying, steam boilers were frequently used, and that the boilers for the most part were not of a very dangerous tendency, but were manufactured in order to do the simplest work, and in order that they would require little attention in management. But if any of the farm labourers had to go before a Board of Examiners to get certificates, and those certificates were to appear in *The London Gazette* before the men could attend to boilers, a great amount of mischief would be done to the country districts generally. Having said this he hoped that if his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) consented to allow the Bill to go further, he would take care that there was no harassing legislation in the Bill, for they wanted as much freedom as possible so long as there was protection of life and property.

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington) said, there was in the Bill a good deal that was valuable, though it seemed to him they would have to correct one or two points. The principal point to be determined was who was the person really in charge of the engine or boiler. Unless they were careful as to the wording of the

Bill, many persons would be thrown out of employment. If, however, it made clear who it was who was understood to be in charge of an engine or boiler, the House might safely assent to the second reading.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said, that a little knowledge was certainly a dangerous thing in the management of a steam engine or boiler. He was in favour of the second reading of the Bill, because he thought that all those who were brought in contact with those who had charge of engines and boilers should be safeguarded. He did not, however, agree with hon. Members who were of opinion that a man should be called upon to pass for the care of an ordinary farm engine the same examination as a man who wished to take charge of a marine engine, because marine engines were very complicated pieces of machinery and were altered in construction every day. At the same time, a simple examination would be a safeguard in the case of all those who had charge of engines. He did not think it was necessary for a man to pass an examination as a fitter or constructor; but still a man who took charge of a boiler ought to have at least a slight knowledge of the working of a steam gauge. The fact was that, in many cases, old worn-out boilers were used upon farms, and they were a source of very great danger, not only to those who had charge of them, but also to those who had to work about them. Not only that, but they were liable to produce in many cases fires and other disasters. He hoped that those in charge of the Bill would be able to explain to the House what sort of examination, roughly speaking, it was sought men should be required to pass. He trusted that nothing of a very complicated nature would be required, because it would throw out of employment a very great number of men. He should support the second reading, and he could not help thinking that in Committee they could put in such restrictions as were considered necessary.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, that an hour ago he was as little aware, as he supposed most hon. Members of the House were, that this subject would come up for discussion that night; but it had been his duty to consider the matter, seeing that the Bill stood on the Orders of the Day, and he had also had to consider it with reference to another Bill introduced by another hon. Member of the House for dealing in another way with this very important question. If he could believe that the effect of the Bill would be anything like what had been attributed to it by the hon. Member (Mr. Broadhurst), certainly he should recommend the House to give it a second reading. More than that, he should do his best to pass it into law. But the point they had to consider appeared to be this—not whether they were anxious, as he was sure all of them were anxious, to do everything in their power to get rid of the terrible dangers of explosions and the causes which now led to them, but whether the particular proposal before them was likely to attain that object. Reference had been made by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) to the qualification required for the engineers in charge of marine engines. As the hon. Member for North Somerset (Mr. Llewellyn) had already stated, it was hardly fair to compare the case of marine engines with ordinary engines. Marine engines were notoriously complicated to a degree, which the engines dealt with in this Bill, or a great majority of them certainly, could not be considered to be. It might be perfectly right and necessary to insist on qualifications in the case of marine engines, whereas it might not be so necessary to insist upon qualifications in the case of ordinary engines. Let him call the attention of the House to the fact that it had been found necessary, in order to exclude as many persons as possible from the scope of the Bill, to say that the mere fact that a man had had charge of an engine or boiler for a period of two years before the 1st of March, 1888, should be sufficient testimony that he was qualified to have such charge. But if that was to be a proper qualification, what became of the argument that all the accidents, or a large proportion of the accidents, were due to the absence of qualification on the part of the men who had charge of the boilers? The very proposal which the hon. Members in charge of the Bill found it necessary to insert in order to avoid depriving hundreds of men now in charge of boilers of employment, showed that the remedy they proposed would not really meet the difficulties they desired to grapple with. Reference had been made by the hon. Member for West Nottingham to the Reports of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade had power, as the hon. Member was aware, to inquire after an explosion had occurred, and to take steps with a view of prosecuting, if necessary, the persons to whose fault the explosion might be due. He had here the Report of the Board of Trade dated the 31st of August, 1886, and in that document he found it stated that in the year 1885-6 there were 57 cases in which preliminary inquiries under Section 6 of the Boilers Explosions Act, 1882, were held. That was an increase in the number of cases as compared with previous years, though the number of lives lost fell below the average. What did the Report state as to the accidents in which inquiries were held? Thirty-two accidents were due to deterioration, corrosion, or defectiveness of the safety valve of the boilers; 16 to defective design or construction; six to ignorance, neglect, or carelessness of the attendants; and three to miscellaneous causes; making 57 in all. Now, the House would observe that of these accidents not a single one would have been avoided had this Bill been in operation. [MR. BROADHURST: Yes, 16.] The Bill before the House would do nothing whatever to prevent defective design or construction of boilers. That might be dealt with by proposals for inspection, which were contained, he believed, in another measure now before the House. Ignorance was the only cause that could possibly be considered to be dealt with by the Bill, and that, as he had already observed, would hardly be guarded against when they admitted that employment for two years past was sufficient qualification. Neglect or carelessness could not be dealt with by the Bill, and, therefore, the result was that practically this Bill would have done no good whatever towards preventing any of the 57 cases of explosions in which inquiries were held by the Board of Trade during the year 1885-6. Now, what was stated in addition? Although such a large proportion of the explosions were caused by the neglect, not of the persons employed to look after the boilers, but of the owners, in no case had the facts been so proved as to warrant the Department in taking the responsibility of recommending a prosecution under the Criminal Law. So that in all these cases it was found impossible to make any person amenable for the misfortune which had occurred. What he wanted to hear from those who were anxious to give a second reading to this Bill was something more than general philanthropic sentiments in favour of preventing these explosions. The hon. Member for West Nottingham was full of such sentiments. He shared those sentiments with the hon. Member, and if, by the passing of this Bill, he believed anything could be done towards remedying this serious evil, he certainly should be one of its earnest supporters. But seeing that the working of this Bill, applying as it did to the small agricultural boilers all over the country, most seriously interfered, and unnecessarily interfered, with agriculture and with the smaller trades, he was bound to ask himself, before he gave his vote in favour of the second reading, whether it was really a Bill that would carry out the object of those who had brought it into the House. He could not satisfy himself that it was so, and, therefore, he would have to give his vote against the second reading.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he did not wonder at the hesitation of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) who had just sat down, if it was thought that the Board of Trade should licence every man who had charge of a boiler or steam engine, and supply him with a certificate to show that he was capable of undertaking such duties. But, after all, the machinery by which it was proposed to accomplish this object was very simple, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman had under-rated considerably the advantages which might accrue from the application of the provisions of this measure. The right hon. Gentleman had said very truly that, in the case of marine engines, there was much more reason for an examination as to the qualification of the persons who were to take charge of them. Marine engines and boilers were much larger and much more complicated than those on shore, as a general rule, and an accident to one of them subjected those who were in the vicinity to the greatest possible danger. The explosion of a marine boiler probably meant the destruction of the ship, and a probable loss of a great number of lives. He thought they were all of them agreed that there had not been much loss of life in connection with boiler explosions of late years; and, with regard to the Report of the accidents the right hon. Gentleman quoted, there was not one which was shown to be an unavoidable accident. The right hon. Gentleman stated that examination would not at all tend in any respect, so far as he could see, to diminish the number of accidents; but, on the contrary, he (Mr. Mundella) thought that if the men who had the control of the boilers and engines referred to in the Report the right hon. Gentleman read, had been intelligent men, the probability was that nine-tenths of the accidents would have been avoided. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted 32 cases where there was deterioration, corrosion, or defectiveness of the safety valves of the boilers, which caused the explosions. Well, an intelligent man, efficient for the discharge of the duty of taking care of a boiler, in each of these cases would have known that there was something wrong, and would have pointed it out—indeed, a man who knew his business would not have worked with a boiler that was defective; he would have declined to place his life in jeopardy under such circumstances. He (Mr. Mundella) knew that employers of labour like himself knew little more than what they were taught by their engineers in regard to their boilers and engines; but there could be no doubt that intelligent engineers would find out that deterioration was taking place, and would not allow that to continue. The right hon. Gentleman said—"But you are willing to take as a test of intelligence that a man has been for two years in charge of a boiler." Now, that was not so; but the right hon. Gentleman would allow him to point out that even in higher professions they had, when they first brought men under registration, to accept the mere fact that they had, for a certain time, discharged the functions that it was necessary to consider them capable of discharging those functions. Take the case of the Medical Profession. Men who had not had the necessary qualifications had been allowed to register because they had been in practice when the registrations were first instituted. In the case of veterinary surgeons, he himself had passed a Bill under which a great many men were allowed to register who had been in practice five years, and he had found that amongst the men who had thus qualified were a number of ex-policemen and some few convicts. These men did not possess the qualification which the measure provided that veterinary surgeons in the future should possess, but they had had the experience of practice. The object of this Bill, although not so much to interfere with the persons who at present had the control of boilers and engines, was to secure that in the future none but intelligent and properly qualified men should be entrusted with such control. He (Mr. Mundella) knew that in his own county there had been many accidents from explosions entirely owing to the ignorance of those in charge of the boilers and engines, and if they could do anything to prevent such ignorance, he trusted they would not hesitate to do it. He saw that the Bill provided examiners, and he was certain that there were civil engineers in every constituency and district where engines and boilers were worked who would be able to give the necessary certificates of competency. By the system proposed, if a civil engineer put to an applicant for a certificate the necessary questions as a test of competency, and the applicant had answered those questions satisfactorily, the certificate would be given to enable that man to take charge of boilers of all kinds. Such a thing would be a safeguard to the public. He did not say that all the provisions of the Bill were perfect, but any that were considered faulty could be amended in Committee. If the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would give a long day to the Committee—that was to say, fix a day some distance off, say a fortnight or three weeks hence—he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would allow the measure to be read a second time. The right hon. Gentleman could consider what Amendments might be necessary, and could take every precaution he pleased to bring the measure under the supervision of the Board of Trade, so as to prevent undue friction in its application. If the right hon. Gentleman would adopt such a course, he would be doing good service to the operative classes of this country.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he proposed to give the House an opportunity of taking a long interval for the consideration of the measure, for he proposed to move that the second reading of it be deferred until that day six months. He objected to the Bill not only because he had received a great many communications from his constituents against it, but because he objected to it on principle. First of all, with regard to the powers it contained, the borough he represented was situated in a county which probably had more boilers and knew more about these questions than any other county in England. [“No, no!”] He undertook to say they had more boilers in Lancashire——

An hon. MEMBER: Than in Yorkshire?

MR. ADDISON said, he would, at any rate, undertake to say that they had more boilers in Lancashire, if Yorkshire was excluded, than in any other county in the country. It was the universal opinion of everybody practically acquainted with this subject in Lancashire, that the Insurance Companies, who were now inspecting boilers in the interests of traders, did their work and insured better examination and greater efficiency on the part of engineers than any State inspection could insure. That, he maintained, was a fact known to all practical men; and, beyond this, he would appeal to the House and ask if such a measure as the present were to be allowed to pass, where this sort of legislation would end? It proceeded upon a sort of notion that no class of the community, and certainly no traders, were ever able to manage their own business for themselves or conduct it without inspection or regulation. It was a class of legislation which they all ought to deprecate. It proceeded on the notion that in every department of trade the State or the Government, or the powers that be, whatever they are, were to be allowed to interfere and tell manufacturers what they ought to do and how they ought to do it—to tell them, in particular, what steps they ought to take to protect life and property. He thought it was in the works of Mr. Buckle—a gentleman for whom hon. Members on the other side of the House ought to have the greatest respect—that they found the doctrine laid down that all the good Acts of Parliament, or nearly all the goods Act of Parliament, had been Acts to put an end to previous legislation, because in all times people, well-meaning people, no doubt, had thought that trade ought to be treated in that sort of spirit by the Legislature, that it could be regulated and managed and controlled a great deal better by Act of Parliament than people could manage it for themselves. Now, what the traders of the country asked was to be let alone; they asked for freedom and liberty, and they asked it not only because experience had shown that all such regulations interfering with trades did harm, but because, in the view of Mr. Buckle, trade as carried on without restriction had been the great means of bringing about the happiness and prosperity of the country. The Bill rested upon a fallacy so far as it was thought that the State could with advantage regulate the private business of traders. The second fallacy upon which it rested was that it would secure all sorts of ability in those who were to undertake the management of boilers and engines, and that they would bring about all sorts of security if they could only enact some sort of limitation in those who undertook the work, and require them to pass examinations. He (Mr. Addison) made bold to say that every practical man in the House knew perfectly well that examinations were no good whatever in securing efficiency in any calling they liked to name—[*Laughter*]—yes, he maintained that examinations were of no use in securing proficiency in any branch of life. Many hon. Members had engineers in their employment, and he would ask those hon. Members if they would not trust these men quite as well, if not a great deal better, than if they had obtained, say, from someone on the opposite side of the House, a certificate of competency such as this Bill proposed to confer upon them? What was the proposed examination to go into? Was it to go into a man's sobriety, into his care, into his diligence and knowledge and scientific learning? How were they going to conduct such an examination? Who was to conduct it, who was to look after it? Such an examination as that proposed would go a very short way indeed towards securing the best men. It was said that such examinations were necessary in the Medical Profession; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) had shown them that they did not get the best men by examinations; but he (Mr. Addison), for himself, quite admitted that as regarded some professions—it might be his own and the Medical Profession—there might be some excuse for insisting upon examination and making them close professions. A great many people, however, on the other hand, thought that it would be better to throw the Professions open, and to have no such restrictions. But, whether that was so or not, why such restrictions should be extended to trade he failed to understand. The fact was, that all these benevolent schemes were a part of that great theory of Protection which hon. Gentlemen opposite were very active in proclaiming against in the simple matter of the Corn Laws, but were most active in defending and extending when it affected subjects and Bills of this kind. This required amongst hon. Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House who were lovers of freedom, as well as of that freedom which every Englishman ought to have to conduct his business in his own way, the most viligant care and attention to watch these constant fallacies and attempts at Protection which came from the other side. No one desired to interfere with those people who watched boilers and engines except those who were anxious to interfere with all callings and to worry and badger all trades. There was no call or necessity for the Bill. The work of managing boilers and engines was done a great deal better than it would be done with it, and he hoped that those who attended to engines and boilers would be left in liberty and peace. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he begged to second the Amendment. He concurred with every word which had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison) as to the importance of taking all possible pains for the preservation of life from accidents to boilers and engines. The question before the House was whether the Bill now before them was such in its provisions as would secure safety in this respect. As a rule the large boilers in the country were in the hands of great capitalists, and no doubt they did their best to employ persons skilled in the management of boilers and engines and watched all these questions with the most delicate care, because they were the persons who would lose most heavily in the case of accidents. Although he put the matter thus on financial grounds he did not mean, and he thought no one would venture to impute for a moment to the great capitalists say of such counties as Lancashire and Yorkshire that they were careless of human life and negligent so far as the welfare of those who worked for them in their great manufacturing establishments were concerned. His friends in the North who were conversant with this subject and capable of giving an opinion in regard to it, thought that the great cause of explosions in boilers was not want of skill in their management, but negligence and carelessness and remissness, and that no examination and no certificate as to qualification and the testing of skill alone could be a security for good conduct and diligence. The adoption of measures for security for good conduct and diligence must always rest with those who had charge and management of the factories. It was to those who had control over the management of the engines and boilers that it was necessary to trust. Many hon. Members found it necessary to travel from time to time, some of them every week, many of them every day by railway. There was no examination for those who had charge of our locomotive engines, and there was no class of men who, so far as the public safety was concerned, had more responsibility resting upon their shoulders, and he said at the same time that there was no class of men in the country who did their work with greater care. The result of the care exercised by these persons was that explosions of locomotive boilers were accidents most rare in occurrence. Even when such an accident did occur he ventured to say that it was not from any fault on the part of the driver or stoker, but from some defect in the boiler of which only a scientific engineer could have been competent to judge. He spoke these few words as representing a great industrial district, and he hoped he might also be permitted to add his testimony to what had fallen from those hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on behalf of those persons employing boilers and engines in the agricultural districts. He knew something of what occurred in the sparsely populated agricultural districts of the country. He knew there were many boilers used by those engaged in agricultural pursuits and those following small industries in remote villages, who would have their trade very much impaired and restricted if the provisions of this Bill were imposed upon them. In these cases it was to the care and diligence of their servants that they would have to trust much more than in any examination, however well conducted, which might be rendered necessary by Act of Parliament.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Addison.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, he would not stand between the House and a Division for more than a moment or two, but he was a manufacturer himself, with boilers of his own, and therefore was not likely to vote for the second reading of a Bill which would harass industry. He must say, however, that in listening to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Addison) who had moved the Amendment, he had been very much astonished, as that speech had seemed to carry him back to the records of debates in this House some 100 years ago. There was not a word which fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman which might not have been urged against the Factory Acts and against all measures which had been passed for the protection of miners and sailors or against any provisions for the protection of the working classes in their various pursuits. It seemed to him that the hon. and learned Member with too much Buckle was made mad. The hon. and learned Member had carried Buckle's arguments to a conclusion which really brought them to this—that there should be no examination for medicine or law, in fact that there should be no examination for anything, but that everybody should be allowed to do everything he liked in this world without the slightest guarantee to the public of his proficiency or competency. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), in his statement about the number of accidents caused by boilers, had somewhat erred. The most frequent cause of boiler explosions, and, therefore, of loss of life through boiler explosions, was the inefficient working of the safety valves, and that was owing, in 99 cases out of 100, either to the ignorance of the man in charge of the boiler, or not very unfrequently through his incapacity at the time through drink. He (Mr. Winterbotham) did not think the Bill was perfect, but he believed that the simple examination and certificate of efficiency which it proposed would prove extremely valuable, and would have the effect of saving a great many lives every year. He appealed to the House on behalf of the working classes generally—he appealed in particular to hon. Members representing large working class constituencies to support the Bill. This was not a Party question, and he would ask hon. Members, whatever their political views may be, to vote for this measure as a step in the right direction. If they only saved a score of lives in the year by rendering the possession of a certificate of competency necessary—and it must be borne in mind that it was a certificate which could be very easily obtained—it was worth while passing the Bill. Certificates were necessary under the Factory Act with regard to the age of children; there was no difficulty in getting certificates as to eyesight in accordance with Board of Trade regulations for signalmen, &c.; and there would be no difficulty in getting certificates with regard to a few simple matters in regard to boilers. There was probably not a town in England where a civil engineer was not to be found, and where, therefore, a certificate under this Bill could not be procured. As to the Bill being harassing to agriculturists using small boilers, it seemed to him that Amendments could be proposed in Committee which would have the effect of preventing small boilers, such as were used in dairies, coming under the operation of the Bill at all. He urged hon. Members to support the Bill in order to prevent selfish employers employing cheap labour, for that was what it meant, instead of skilled labour, and thereby endangering the lives of their *employés* in factories and workshops.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I should like to say one or two words on this Bill, and in the first place, I desire to point out that this debate is remarkable in several respects. I would draw the attention of the House to the fact that not one single Member whose name is on the back of the Bill has addressed the House or given a single reason in support of the acceptance of the measure. Now, this being a Bill apparently promoted by those who profess to understand something about the question, one might have expected that they would have enlightened us upon the subject, and given us some knowledge of their reason for proposing the measure. It is rather remarkable that they have not done so, and there is another remarkable fact—namely, that not a single Member who has addressed the House has pointed to even one instance where an accident which has occurred through the explosion of a boiler or an engine would have been prevented if this Bill had been in operation. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucester (Mr. Winterbotham) took to task my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade for what he said about the Report of the Board of Trade on this very question, and the hon. Gentlemen went on—I hope I am not speaking too strongly, but I am expressing my opinion when I use the words—to libel the men in charge of these boilers. He went on to say that these explosions occurred either from ignorance or through drink. Well, Sir, anybody who knows anything of this subject and of the attention which employers of labour pay to these matters, must know that no person in drink would for a moment be allowed to take charge of a boiler. I say it is a libel upon the men who take charge of engines and boilers in this country to charge them either with ignorance or with being in that condition in which the hon. Member supposes they are generally to be found.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman; but I spoke of accidents due to the inefficient working of the safety valve of boilers, and I said that in 99 cases out of 100 they were to be attributed either to the ignorance of the man in charge of the boiler, or to his being incapacitated through drink.

MR. JACKSON: Well, I do not think the explanation the hon. Gentleman has offered to the House in any sense alters the conclusion that the House will arrive at, or in any sense challenges the accuracy of what I stated. Now, I had hoped, as I have said, that some Member of the House who has had practical experience of this question would have been good enough to say a few words to the House on the subject of the Bill. I cannot claim to have much knowledge of boilers and engines, but I can claim to have had some practical experience of their working, because, during my life I have been in charge both of a boiler and an engine, and when I hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) talking here about employers of labour in this country not knowing whether their boilers are being deteriorated by corrosion or not, and not being in a position to protect themselves, I marvel where he has lived, and how he can have forgotten that there are in this country boiler insurance and protection associations.

MR. MUNDELLA: I did not say that employers did not know how to protect themselves—I made use of no such language. I was always accustomed to insure my own boilers, and I have no doubt that the hon. Gentleman did the same. What I said was that my personal knowledge of deterioration and corrosion and defectiveness of the safety valve was not of much value, and that I trusted entirely to the engineers. I also called attention to my belief that if we had the circumstances of the 57 accidents reported to the Board of Trade read out, we should find that these accidents were not inevitable.

MR. JACKSON: The right hon. Gentleman says that the employers do not know of the deterioration of their boilers. My point is this—that employers in this country can and do protect themselves from the want of their own individual and personal inspection by employing these insurance societies who undertake the business for them, and I will go further and say that as a matter of safety, not only to workmen engaged in the works, but also to those thousands of people who pass those works, the inspection by one of these Societies voluntarily undertaken is of much more value practically than any examination which would be obtained under the Bill. We have heard something about deterioration and we have heard something about corrosion; but what does the Bill propose to do? Does it propose to impose upon the engineer in charge that he shall go inside the boiler every time it is cleaned out and travel through the flues every time they are swept, because unless he does that it is absolutely impossible to say whether or not the boiler is free from corrosion. [“No, no!”] Somebody says “No,” but I have had practical experience of this matter myself, having been inside the boiler and through the flues myself. If I do not speak with much practical knowledge, at any rate, as I have said, I speak from practical experience, and I maintain that so far as this Bill is concerned it would absolutely fail of its purpose. If its purpose is merely to effect the object of preventing explosions it should be made compulsory that every man, not only in charge of an engine and a boiler, but every stoker who fired a boiler, and therefore saw the water gauge and steam gauge and knew what pressure of steam there was, should also have a certificate. This would be essential, because everyone who knows anything about the matter knows that within a very few moments steam may rise to such a pressure that danger may ensue if anything goes wrong. No examination and no supervision in the sense in which this Bill is drawn could possibly prevent such a thing. Now, something has been said about marine engines and boilers, and I am sorry the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), who spoke on this subject, is not here. Well, I am not quite sure, but I rather think that in the case of marine engines certificates are not required for the engineers of all steam vessels, but only for those of a certain class of steam ships. I rather think that certificates are limited to engineers of steamers engaged in the passenger trade and foreign going steamships. This Bill, if passed, would apply not only to large businesses where a great many engines and boilers are employed, but to every small manufacturing concern in the country, and it is quite clear to my mind either that those who drew the Bill did not intend it to apply to all small works or that they have failed to appreciate the difficulties which would follow if it did apply to them. Because what does the Bill itself say? It says that those engines or boilers to which the Act applies should be placed or kept at all times when at work under the supervision of some person holding a certificate of qualification under the Act. It says that one of these certificated men should not have charge of more than a certain number of boilers or engines, or of boilers or engines which were apart a greater distance than the Board of Trade should prescribe. That does not contemplate the man in charge of the boiler having a certificate, but it points to the man who is to have the superintendence having a certificate. It does not contemplate that the man who fires the boiler should have a certificate, but that this should be possessed by some individual who has the general supervision of the whole concern. I venture to say, from my own experience, that supervision of that kind would not prevent one single explosion which takes place under the present system, and, I say that if you carried it out further you would be guilty of an enormous injustice and would do enormous injury to the small manufacturers of the country, who keep one man not only to run the engine but also to fire the boiler. I must say I am surprised that men sitting for constituencies such as those of the hon. Members who promote this Bill should not have seen the effect of the measure. If they had seen it, I should have been even more intensely astonished at their bringing it forward; for it is a Bill which, in my humble judgment, would absolutely cripple the trade of the country. It will do no good in itself and will inflict enormous injury to a large class of working men.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, the hon. Member had spoken with a warmth and vehemence that showed he was master of the subject. He complained that no Member in charge of the Bill had spoken on the second reading. Well, he (Mr. Fenwick) admitted the charge, but his answer was that he thought he was best consulting the wishes of the House in simply moving the second reading in the formal manner usual on such occasions. He had reason to believe there was general concurrence in the main principle of the Bill, and he made no speech, thinking the Division, if there was to be one, would be so much earlier. The hon. Member also said that no hon. Member had ventured to say that these boiler explosions attended with loss of life were caused by the ignorance of the men in charge of the engine or boiler; but he (Mr. Fenwick) wondered that it did not occur to the hon. Gentleman that the persons who were best qualified to give information on that subject were probably the persons whose lives were sacrificed by the explosion. Did the hon. Gentleman forget that only in last Session his own Government were engaged in legislation which provided for the examination of managers having charge of coal mines? Why did the Government deem it necessary to enact such strict provisions in that Bill to secure the competency of those in charge of mines? They were deemed necessary because of the serious explosions and loss of life that had occurred in coal mines; and while it was impossible to find culpable negligence on the part of those responsible for the management, notwithstanding that fact could not be proved, yet it was deemed expedient to bring in such a measure and provide for the examination of mine managers. The same principle was embodied in the Bill, simply seeking to ensure that persons who had charge of steam engines and boilers on land should have some technical knowledge at least of the machines with which they had to deal. The hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) seemed in his remarks to convey the idea that Members on the Opposition side attached little importance to the care and diligence of those who had charge of steam engines and boilers. Care and diligence he (Mr. Fenwick) was not disposed to under-rate in any calling; but all the care, diligence, steadiness, and sobriety you could command would be of no avail to reduce injury and loss of life to a minimum unless the man in charge had some technical knowledge of his calling combined with his care and steadiness. He had thought hon. Members opposite claimed to be the champions of technical education; ever and anon they were dinning technical education into the ears of Parliament and the country, and he might have expected they would readily support the main principle of the Bill, which was to ensure that one class of artizans should have some technical education in matters with which they were immediately concerned. Objections had been urged to the Bill on the ground that it would seriously interfere with trades, especially small trades in the country, and he was willing to admit there might be minor details of the Bill that would require careful attention in Committee, and he would be quite willing to accept any well considered Amendment that did not seriously interfere with the main principle of the Bill. It certainly was not his intention—and he among the promoters of the Bill was perhaps most responsible—to cause any vexatious interference with any trade, however small, and if the House accepted the second reading, he would give every assurance that he would consider any Amendment proposed in Committee with the view of preventing that the Bill in its operation should not press harshly upon any trade or manufacture. Also he was prepared to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield, and allow an ample interval for the consideration of Amendments before asking the House to take the Committee.

Mr. WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon) said, he should like to know whether hon. Members who favoured the Bill proposed that the Bill should include locomotive engines? If they did, then they could hardly have considered the subject sufficiently, for he found, under the Bill, that Inspectors were to be men who had two years' experience, or who held a certificate from the Board of Trade. Now, the men who had charge of locomotive engines were men of from 12 to 20 years' experience, and, apparently, there would be put over their heads, men with but two years' experience as independent Inspectors in regard to boilers.

Mr. FENWICK pointed out that the provision for two years' experience was to cover those who were now in the service, as an equivalent for a certificate; in fact a service certificate, such as was given under the Coal Mines Act of last Session.

Mr. WHARTON said, he was obliged to the hon. Member for the explanation. But there was another matter hon. Members had probably not considered, and that was the number of locomotives in daily use, He believed the number was from 12,000 to 15,000, and how were all these boilers to be inspected? The terms of the Bill were—

> "Every engine or boiler to which this Act applies, shall be placed and kept at all times when at work under the supervision of some person holding a certificate of qualification under the Act."

How, he should like to know, was the supervisor to inspect these engines when at work? Was the "Flying Scotchman" always to have an Inspector on board, or when was he to inspect the engine? It appeared to him that the provision was absolutely ridiculous. To have a Board of Trade Inspector inspecting every engine every day appeared to him an absolute absurdity. The expense of such a provision was an important item. If the Board of Trade was to employ Inspectors who would have to be competent men, Parliament would have to find their pay, and the House would soon find the expense something considerable. The objection had been urged that the Bill would interfere with every trade; but he spoke not only on behalf of the railway interest, but of the railway passengers, and protested against Inspectors of two years' experience being held as competent as drivers of 20 years' experience. No doubt, the Bill would interfere with all trades; but, on behalf of the railway trade and railway passengers, he should certainly vote against the Bill.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.) said, he had not heard anything that led him to suppose that the Bill would produce the good results that were anticipated from it. He should prefer, if there was to be legislation on the subject at all, for the purpose of giving more security to life from boiler accidents, that there should be constituted a system of compulsory inspection. He believed a regulation of that kind would be much more satisfactory in result than the Bill. If he was rightly informed, something like half the boilers in use were already inspected, and the result, he believed, was most satisfactory. There was the benefit of experience, and he thought it would not be difficult to pass a Bill through the House making inspection universal. He was satisfied that inspection of boilers, whilst producing better results, would be far less harassing both to employers and employed. Much had been said as to the effect of the Bill upon small employers, and undoubtedly it might be very unjust on many occasions. He did not very well see how such injustice could be avoided. There were many cases where small employers employed only a man to work a small engine, and this man would, under the Bill, have to hold a certificate, and if anybody not certificated meddled with the engine or boiler he would be subjected to a considerable fine, as would also the employer. But suppose the certificated man were ill or absent from his work for a day, the concern, whatever it might be, would have to be closed, for it would be impossible to immediately get another certificated man. He mentioned this to illustrate the harassing nature of the provision, and he firmly believed his hon. Friends were not on the right tack.

Mr. SALT (Stafford) said, he believed the Bill, as it stood, would work very great injustice to a large number of small manufacturers who used engines. He really did not think any hon. Member, except the last speaker, knew what a large number of small engines were used by manufacturers, by builders, by farmers for farming, pumping, and many purposes. He granted that the intention of the Bill was good, and the idea of having boilers inspected was one that all would sympathize with. But the Bill was drawn on wrong lines entirely, and in principle it was wrong. It would not touch the great employers of labour, men of large capital who had skilled workmen of the highest calibre at command, but it would do serious injury to thousands of small rising industries in which a steam engine was used. If there had been the one single principle in the Bill, providing that boilers should be subject to inspection, he would not have opposed the second reading, but have waited to consider it in Committee; but he believed the principle was wrong and thoroughly unworkable, and, so far from doing good, it would be the cause of infinite mischief.

Mr. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields) said, while he sympathized with its object, he felt constrained to vote against the Bill. They had far too much Government inspection and interference already. He appreciated the motive of those who framed the Bill, but he believed it would not realize the benefit they expected. He would rather place reliance on the spread of education and increase of intelligence among those in charge of engines. He was happy to observe even among unskilled labourers of the country very much more intelligence than was to be found among skilled artizans of half-a-century ago, and he looked forward to still further progress of information and thoughtfulness among those taking charge of engines and boilers.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) said, he must object to the Bill in the agricultural interest, as it would be most harassing to tenant farmers who used engines for various purposes. No hon. Member could say many accidents happened from boilers used for threshing machines or fixed engines on farm holdings. It would often happen that the man who generally drove a threshing machine engine, from some cause might be unable to attend, and the threshing of a stack would have to be delayed if a certificated man was compulsory. In a rural district certificated men would not readily be found, but there might be another man quite capable of driving the engine, and who perhaps had taken turns in doing so with the regular engineer, and it would be hard that the machine should of necessity remain idle, because each of the two or three men with it was not not certificated. He was quite certain that, among the farming interest, there would be a very strong feeling against such a proposal. There was another interest that had not been alluded to. Did the House realize that, at the present time, among the fishing vessels in the North Sea there were a large number having a small engine on board, not to propel the vessel, but for working the capstan? The vessels carried five or six hands, and the engine perhaps was used only two hours a-day, and any of the men were quite capable of working the steam capstan.

MR. FENWICK said, he was sorry to interrupt, but the hon. Member had not observed that the Bill only applied to engines and boilers on land, and made no mention whatever of fishing vessels.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK said, he found he was mistaken, and thanked the hon. Member for his explanation. His objection was on behalf of the agricultural interest, and he protested against such a harassing proposal. If such a Bill as this were passed, it might next be proposed that drivers of cabs, omnibuses, and perambulators should take out certificates.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he had listened to the debate with mingled surprise and sorrow, because, for the first time in the House, he had found a great part of hon. Gentlemen opposite engaged in the deification of ignorance. The whole attitude of hon. Members opposite had been in favour of ignorance as the best method of controlling scientific machinery. Surely if a scientific machine required study in the making, it required a certain amount of study for its action, and would be best managed by men of knowledge and experience. But the whole contention of hon. Members opposite was in a contrary direction, including the hon. and learned Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison), who contended that all legislation was wrong that did not upset past legislation. It was a pity he did not act on that view when the Crimes Act was under discussion. All that the Bill required was that a man should have some qualification for his duty—that any man controlling an engine should be competent, his competency being established by certificate or two years' experience, so that the argument of 25 years' experience being destroyed was altogether beside the question.

MR. WHARTON said, what he objected to was that engineers should be under the surveillance of Inspectors of only two years' experience.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said, he might suggest to the hon. and learned Member that there was no question of Inspectors; the Bill did not contemplate the appointment of an Inspector, but simply that the man should have a certificate of qualification or an experience of at least two years.

MR. JACKSON said, that was for the supervision of those who drove.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said, supervision was control of the engine, and it was the same thing with a locomotive; it could not be supposed that a supervisor was to travel alongside the locomotive. The hon. Gentleman was trying to throw ridicule on the honest well-meant attempt of mining Representatives to protect the lives of mining operatives; it was not worthy of himself and his position. The whole argument against the Bill amounted to saying that ignorance was better than skill. That was the argument that had been advanced over and over again by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that was the condition of mind that had brought about the present commercial condition of the country. If there had been a willingness beforehand to encourage scientific knowledge applied to manufacture, the present commercial depression might have been avoided. Let hon. Members show their zeal for technical education by voting for scientific knowledge for engineers, the principle was the same. Too long we had neglected skilled instruction for our operatives, and to put ignorance in front of skill was unworthy of a great Party who professed to advocate technical education. Accidents that occurred from boilers exploding could, in great part, be avoided were skilful men in charge; the words of the President of the Board of Trade were—"None of these accidents were inevitable." A skilful man as engineer was better than an ignorant one, and accidents were more likely to be avoided. On the grounds of humanity and of general experience the Bill ought to be supported.

MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he should not like these remarks to remain unanswered, so far as agriculture was concerned, and agriculture was closely concerned, seeing that farmers thrashed corn and cut chaff by steam, and had engines in general use on the farm. He had had considerable experience of these engines, and never yet had he known a case of any bad accident arising from want of intelligence on the part of the man who drove the engine. If the Bill passed, it would have the most unjust effect on many industrious, respectable men, who had charge of engines, and who certainly could not be described as ignorant. If it was necessary to have a Bill of this nature passed in reference to every pursuit to which a certain amount of danger attached, there would be no end to such Bills. He was quite sure that there were far more accidents through men having charge of horses not thoroughly understanding how to manage the animals, than from men not knowing how to work an engine properly; but surely hon. Members would not propose that his ploughman or horseman should get a certificate before taking a horse out. Whatever might be the case in reference to engines in large manufactories, he was not aware of there being the slightest demand for a Bill of this sort in connection with engines used in agriculture; and he hoped the House would hesitate before passing such a Bill. He was no more a friend to ignorance than the hon. Gentleman (Sir Walter Foster); but he did not believe in unnecessarily harassing farmers and farm labourers with legislation such as this.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 96; Noes 147: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 73.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second reading *put off* for six months.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

(*Dr. Clark, Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Mackintosh, Dr. Macdonald, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Lyell.*)

[BILL 162.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

DR. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) begged to second the proposal of his hon. Friend, and in doing so said he would state to the House in a few words what was the purport of the Bill. It was, in fact, to bring under the operation of the Crofters' Act all leaseholders in Highland counties under £30. As the House knew when the Crofters' Bill was passed, no leaseholders were put under it. But since then, there had been made a precedent for this Bill, because Irish leaseholders —large and small—had been enabled to apply to the Irish Land Courts. In this Bill they were only asking that the privilege should be extended to small leaseholders under £30 a-year. They should remember that since the Act was passed rents in the crofting counties had been reduced quite 40 per cent, and he hoped the House would now see its way to granting this little concession to the small leaseholders, for it could do no harm.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh.*)

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright), in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, from what he had gathered from the speech just delivered, the only reason for bringing in the Bill was that it was desirable to make Scotland like Ireland, to place Scotch leaseholders in the same position as the Irish. But it seemed to him that the great wish of hon. Members opposite was to place the whole of Scotland under the Crofters' Act. Well, that point was thoroughly discussed in 1886, when the Bill was before the House. The Bill was introduced in a speech of great length in 1886 by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and it was now hardly fair to ask the House to reverse a decision come to after great deliberation and consideration. In the first place, no grievance had been proved, and if there was a grievance it had not been mentioned in the House that night, and surely it was not a fair proposal at that hour to alter the system of land tenure in Scotland for the purpose of satisfying one particular class, without attempting to show any cause whatever for the alteration. He had nothing to do with crofters —nor did he wish to have anything to do with them—in his part of the country; but he would point out that although leaseholders had no access to the Crofter Commission, yet very many of them had obtained reductions of rent; therefore they had not suffered in the way the House was led to believe. This question having been discussed and decided in 1886 the House ought not now to be asked to reverse its decision.

MR. SALT (Stafford) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Dr. R. Macdonald

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said, that on such a Bill they had a right to expect a statement of their views from the Government. The reasons which existed for the passing of the Crofters' Act in 1886 were equally urgent now in support of the proposal before the House. In 1886, the argument was advanced that there was no precedent for the proposals in this Bill. But a precedent had since been established by the existing Government in the Act of last Session for the revision of rents under leases in Ireland, and surely they ought to be as liberal with Highlanders as they had been with the people of Ireland. To say that there was no grievance was untenable, for everybody knew that the leaseholders in the Highlands were paying excessive rents. It was quite true that, in many cases, landlords had made reductions to leaseholders, and that fact proved their case; it seemed indeed an additional argument why the Bill should be passed.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he was totally unable to understand the argument of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Mark Stewart). It was not proposed to extend the Crofters' Act to all parts of Scotland; it was only asked that certain leaseholders should participate in its benefits. It was not even proposed to extend it to the large leaseholders, it was only to extend it to small leaseholders in crofting parishes, to those who had real *bonâ fide* crofts and were under terms which they had accepted years ago. In Ireland a concession such as this had been made to large as well as to small leaseholders. He did not want to go so far as that, but he held that a crofter who had accepted terms which were too high, should have the power to apply to the Court. He trusted that the Government would not resist that very moderate concession; it would be illogical, unfair, and unreasonable for them to do so, and he hoped that this small act of justice would be done to a small class of tenants.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, that after what they had seen of land legislation in connection with Scotland and with Ireland, there was no reason in the world why the Government should be in the least alarmed at the prospect presented by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) of doing something which he said was illogical. The hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) had a few minutes earlier declared that the House was entitled to the views of the Government, but it appeared to him that the usual course on the introduction of a Bill in that House was that the promoters should on the second reading give their views in the first place, in order that the Government might have an opportunity of judging whether the Motion was one that ought to be opposed or not. His hon. Friend (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) in moving the second reading absolutely abstained from taking that course, as had also been done in the case of other Bills before the House that evening. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion (Dr. R. Macdonald) seemed rather ashamed of that, and he thought it better to say something. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy had told them that it was not proposed to extend the Bill to the whole of Scotland. But they knew very well that the hon. and learned Member for Nairnshire (Mr. Anderson) intended, if he could, to extend not only the provisions of this Bill, but of the Crofters' Act also to all leaseholders and tenants throughout Scotland, and no doubt hon. Gentlemen opposite thought that a very reasonable and fair thing to do. Therefore, the Government, remembering as they did how they had been told upon every successive move made both on the Irish chess-board and on the Scotch, in reference to the move that land was made for entirely exceptional reasons, and when they found that the result of making an exceptional move was an immediate request to take another step, and still another step, until the whole country was absorbed—were not prepared to adopt the course which had been suggested. From beginning to end of the history of land legislation, no proposal had been made by hon. Members opposite which had not been advanced on exceptional grounds, which it was said could not possibly affect the rest of the country, and yet from time to time those statements had proved absolutely fallacious. Remembering that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to accept this proposal at the instance of the hon. Members for Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, surely it was more important to ask the opinions of Her Majesty's late Government, for the opinions of the present Government on this question had always been the same.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY: The late Government, I believe, have changed their opinion.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that although he could not suppose that a private Member representing a constituency North of the Tweed would be able to express the views of the Government, yet he should not be surprised if what he said turned out to be correct.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY: I know it is so.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that though he would not be surprised if it were correct, yet he would not believe it till he heard it from a responsible member of the late Government. His right hon. Friend, who was responsible for the Crofters' Act of 1886, distinctly intimated, in the course of the debate, that he would not accept an Amendment that would do the very thing which was now proposed. His opinion might have altered since then, but certainly the circumstances of Scotland had not altered in one single repect. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members opposite might cry "Oh!" but if they had such a triumphant case, why did they not state it for the information of the House. If the circumstances of Scotland had changed, they ought to have some statement on the subject. The reasons which his right hon. Friend gave in 1886 were reasons which could not change. Let them go back for a moment to the question of Ireland. They were told that because a certain thing was done in Ireland, it ought also to be done in the Highlands of Scotland. But the fundamental basis of all that had been done in Ireland, rightly or wrongly, was that in Ireland there had always been what was practically a dual ownership of the soil, and it was the general wish of the House and the intention of the Government, as soon as it could give effect to it by reasonable means, to put an end, if possible, to that dual ownership. What was done last year in the case of Ireland was a temporary expedient in view of tiding over the difficulty during the time which might be necessary for completing the abolition of the dual ownership. ["Oh, oh!"] Again hon. Members cried "Oh!" but he had looked at the report of last year's debates, and he had found distinct evidence of that fact. He himself heard it stated last year—and he had now seen it in print—that the whole purport and object of the procedure in Ireland during the last few years had been with a view of tiding over the difficulty till dual ownership was abolished and practically single ownership established in Ireland. What was the argument of the right hon. Gentleman in 1886 in reference to the Crofters' Bill? It was that there was no analogy between the two cases, that there was no right whatever on the part of the crofters in the land, and that their position was one of having had, for some historical reason never very clearly defined, but still accepted by the House, some right to stay on the land; but that the crofter was in any sense a dual owner of the land was most distinctly and emphatically repudiated over and over again in the debate. Now, if any discoveries had been made which had led to the change of opinion suggested to have taken place on the part of the late Government, he should very much like to hear them explained. The Government still held to their views in the matter. The matter was thoroughly threshed out by a noble Duke who had large possessions in the West Highlands, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and surely no very fresh light had been thrown on it during the last two years. If such light had been cast on it, it could not be said he was unreasonable in asking for an explanation. He ventured to say there was not a single hon. Member on the other side of the House who, 20 years ago, would not have considered that persons who had leases were in a much better position than those who had not. And why? Because they had certainty of tenure for a given time, and in a period of prosperity they could reap the full benefit of it. Of course, they would have to take their chance of adverse seasons; but then they could depend on the sympathy of the landlords, who in the Highlands, as well as in other parts of Scotland and England, had been found most willing to give the tenant due consideration in hard times. It was in vain to suggest for one moment the idea that leases were unfavourable to a person who was a tenant of the soil. No doubt, it was an idea which necessarily arose in the minds of tenants, when there was a long period of depression, of bad seasons, of bad harvests, and of bad markets, which prevented the sale of the produce. Then, of course, it occurred to every man that he would be better off without a lease; but it was only within the last year or two that the idea had arisen that the granting of a lease for a term of years to a tenant was not an act on the part of the landlord done practically at the request of the tenant and in his interest and not in the interests of the landlord. He knew that from his own experience. It was perfectly natural that a farmer in hard times should wish to get off his bargain, but it should not be forgotten that in times of prosperity he reaped all the benefit. But to suggest that it was a hardship on the tenant to have a lease, instead of being at the mercy of his landlord from year to year, was a suggestion no man would make who knew the facts of the case. But what was the position of the crofter who had no lease, compared with the crofter who had one? The former was the very man his right hon. Friend wished to help, for the simple reason that he was exposed to the immediate risk of eviction if he did not pay the stipulated rent for a single year. On the other hand, the tenant who occupied under a lease was always presumed to be a man in better circumstances than the one who had no lease. He ventured to say that it was not possible for hon. Members opposite to refer to a single case in the Highlands in which, in consequence of inability to pay rent on the part of the leaseholder—of a small leaseholder under £30—he had been evicted. Even if they should quote cases in which notices of eviction had been served, there would be something to say. They might be told that certain things would happen, but still they were left in this position, that the whole argument in this case was not based on anything proved to have occurred, or likely to happen, but entirely on the analogy with Ireland. The question was, should there be an alteration in the law of 1886, a law passed after much discussion, and after the right hon. Gentleman opposite had given earnest attention to the details of it. It had worked satisfactorily, yet the very first House of Commons elected after the passing of the Franchise Bill was asked to disturb it without any facts being stated in justification of the disturbance. He would recall what took place last year. His right hon. Friend having spoken against the Amendment—and spoken emphatically and distinctly—if he remembered rightly very distinct opposition came from the Liberal side of the House, from Gentlemen who could not be suspected of sympathy with Her Majesty's present Government. He remembered that the Member for Linlithgowshire (Mr. M'Lagan) spoke distinctly and clearly as to the great dangers which would result from any attempt to deal thus with contracts in writing. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) was also most emphatic on the same subject. Had they now changed their opinions? Did crossing from one side of the House to the other affect the opinions of hon. Members? Let them remember, too, that his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) spoke not merely for himself, but with the responsibility of the whole Front Bench? Was there now any alteration in his views? There had been no suggestion of any facts by hon. Members' opposition which called for a change in the law, and the Government were not prepared to accept this Bill, because they believed that the reason for which the proposal was rejected in 1886 still held good, and nothing had since occurred to justify a change.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR (Clackmannan, &c.) said, his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) had challenged the late Government to express their views on the question before the House, and, in particular, to state whether they had changed the opinions which they held in 1886 upon that subject. As he had the duty of carrying the Crofters' Act through the House, it was proper that he should respond to the challenge; but he was bound to remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman that a late Government was not exactly like the present Government. The late Government was no longer a corporate entity, the Members who had composed it were not required to meet for the purpose of considering such Bills as this; and in anything he now said he merely expressed his own opinion, and would bind nobody but himself. He would tell his right hon. and learned Friend what were the views he entertained in regard to this Bill. In the first place, he would ask the House to notice precisely what the Bill did, and what it did not do. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had expressed great terror as to the future. He had attempted to show, he ventured to say unsuccessfully, that taking one step necessarily led to taking another. He seemed to think that by assenting to the Bill they would agree to extend the principle of the Crofters' Act all over Scotland. But if any question of that kind were raised, it would be considered and discussed upon its merits at the proper time, and he was sure that Parliament would not hesitate to take any step it might think right. Stated shortly, the effect of the Bill as he read it was simply to strike out of the Crofters' Act the words "from year to year." The definition of a crofter would remain the same in all other respects, but the benefits of that Act would be extended to persons who held upon a tenure of more than one year. What he would ask the House to notice was that the very ingredients which entered into the definition of crofter, and to which they attached so much importance, would still be preserved by this Bill. A crofter meant a tenant who resided on his holding, the value of the holding not to exceed £30; the holding to be situated in a crofting parish; and if not actually a crofter himself, he must have to be the successor of the crofter—his heir or legatee. Even if the Bill were assented to, it would not extend the area or scope of the Crofters' Act, the operation of which would still be confined to crofting parishes. He thought the House would see there was no very large question involved; it was simply whether the word crofter should not include leaseholders. His right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate said that when the Bill of 1886 was before the House, the proposal was resisted, and resisted on the ground—not quoting the actual words—that leaseholders were in a totally different position from tenants from year to year, that they had always been so regarded, and that even in the Irish Land Act of 1881 there had never been any interference with persons who were holders under contract. But a great deal had happened since then. In last Session the present Government extended to Irish leaseholders the benefits of the Act of 1881, which previously the House of Commons had declined to do. His right hon. and learned Friend said that the dual ownership formed a distinguishing feature in Ireland, as compared with the tenure in England and Scotland. No doubt it did; but this did not affect the question now under consideration. Though he did not profess to know much about Irish leases, he assumed in Ireland, as elsewhere, when a man held land on lease, that lease would be the measure and definition of his rights in the land let. That must be so, for what would be the use of a lease if it were not the measure and the definition of his rights? Well, then, when the present Government and House of Commons said that leaseholders in Ireland were to have the benefit of getting what proved to be oppressive rents reduced, he failed to see any reason why the same Government and the same House of Commons should decline to extend to a much more limited class of tenants in Scotland the like benefit already conceded to yearly tenants. It was perfectly true that the Crofters' Act was confined to customary holders; but it was matter of common knowledge that very many of those who had been customary holders had got leases, not because they desired them, but because they were obliged to take them. It was now felt to be a great hardship and misfortune that persons who possessed the same claim to relief in all other respects, except that they had made a contract or lease, should be cut off from the benefit of the Act. Having regard to what had been done by the present Parliament and the present Government in reference to Irish leaseholders, he, for one, was unable to see that there was any serious or valid objection to extending to the very limited class affected by the Bill the same benefit which had already been given to holders from year to year when they could show that they were heavily over-rented. In the older law of Scotland there was relief to those who suffered severe loss *plus quam tolerabile.* It was very hard that where two persons had holdings side by side, and were in all respects in the same position except that one of them had accepted a lease while the other had not a lease, the leaseholder found his neighbour getting his rent reduced by a third or a half by the Crofter Commission, while he was cut off from the chance of anything of the kind, and must go on paying an exorbitant rent. He would be sorry to make any suggestion or statement not supported by fact, and therefore he would merely say he had heard it asserted that many crofters were pressed or induced to take leases just about the time that proposals for legislation came into the air—for they had a Crofter Bill in 1885 as well as in 1886. Now, if that were the case, it would be a very bitter hardship for a man who had been so pressed or persuaded into taking a lease. The House would be but following out logically the action it took in making the extension to Irish leaseholders, if it extended the Crofters' Act to small leaseholders under £30. There were many reasons why Parliament should pause before interfering in contracts entered into upon equal terms, or contracts that did not come within the crofter class; but there was every reason why a Government that extended the Act of 1881 to Irish leaseholders should have less hesitation in extending the Crofters' Act to a much smaller class under the limit of £30, a limit rarely touched, most of the holdings being only a few pounds. Larger holdings would not be affected. All the considerations that prevented the introduction of this provision in 1886 had disappeared; it would then have been an entirely new principle, Parliament would not have accepted it, and it could not have been consistently introduced. But a material change had come about by the legislation of last year, and the claim for the extension of the same relief to a small class of leaseholders in the North and West of Scotland could not reasonably be denied.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) rose to speak, when——

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College), rising, claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent. He said the debate had not been conducted for such a length of time that it was desirable to take the opinion of the House while still an interval of time was left for discussion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he would not delay the decision for any length of time, but the grace with which the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. J. B. Balfour) had gone through the rather severe operation of eating his own words required a few words of comment. The last part of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was a happy illustration of the fallacies in the first part; for in the first part he told the House that the mere fact of Parliament passing a Bill in regard to one class of tenants never would be urged, or was likely to be urged, to influence Parliament in passing a Bill for a class of tenants in another part of the country, and immediately afterwards he went on to argue that the passing of an Act for Ireland last year was ample reason for applying this Bill to leaseholders in Scotland. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman should be reminded that there was a fundamental difference between the cases of Ireland and Scotland. In Ireland, leaseholders were the exception to an universal national system, and it was felt by Parliament that, under existing circumstances, it was absolutely impossible to maintain the exception. But leases in the Highlands of Scotland were not the exception, but the rule.

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: Crofter leases?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman draw a distinction between small farmers under £30 in Inverness-shire and Perthshire?

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman will find that among the class of persons to whose case this Bill is directed leases are by no means common. There is a great difference between the body of leaseholders throughout Scotland and the small customary holders in small crofter counties who have been got to accept leases.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Got to accept leases?

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: Have accepted leases.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR continued. Got to accept leases was the allegation of hon. Gentlemen opposite; but there was no class of tenants in Scotland who had got to accept leases; as a class they desired to get leases. [*Cries of* "No!"] Unquestionably that was the fact. No distinction, historically or practically, could be drawn between the leaseholders in Inverness-shire and Ross-shire; they were similar to those in Perthshire, Aberdeen, and elsewhere, not crofter counties. The right hon. Gentleman forgot when he said there was a certain hardship in the circumstances of a man who had a lease of his holding as compared with his neighbour who had no lease; that in all exceptional legislation there must be a border land, and a hedge might be the division, on one side of which were one set of conditions, on the other side another; and it was an illustration of the extent to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman's argument might be carried that the privilege you give to one side you must ultimately give to the other; what you give to Inverness you cannot refuse to Banff, to Fife, or to Aberdeen; and why not extend it to the whole of the United Kingdom? That, no doubt, would meet with the approval of the supporters of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He did not wish to detain the House unnecessarily. He would point out, however, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not say a word in his remarks as to the ground on which the Crofters' Act was introduced by his Government. It was introduced on a definite historical basis, and applied to holders from year to year, not to the great mass of small leaseholders; it excepted leases on the definite undertaking to improve the holding—it excepted what were called improvement leases. If this Bill were accepted, that historical basis would be abandoned, which was the sole ground for limiting the Act to crofter tenants from year to year in crofter counties, and the only distinction between these and other leases would be swept away. This was a question of extreme gravity in view of the tendencies prevailing at this time. The House might have been right or wrong in applying to Ireland exceptional principles of land tenure; but let it not be forgotten that the ideal tenure was free contract between man and man. That might be an impossible idea in Ireland, but it was not impossible in England and Scotland, and it was something worthy of being retained. He asked the House to unequivocally reject the proposal, which would abandon all the historical bases upon which the Crofters'

Act was justified, leaving the House face to face with principles capable of infinite extension, and the greatest injury to leaseholders throughout the whole Kingdom.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 90; Noes 126: Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 74.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *put off* for six months.

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henniker Heaton, Bill for the better administration of the Funds of Queen Anne's Bounty, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Hanbury, and Mr. Kerans.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 211.]

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Ordered, That so much of the Lords Message as proposes the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Private Bill Legislation be now *considered:*—

Lords Message considered *accordingly.*

Ordered, That the Select Committee appointed to join with the Committee of the Lords to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified, with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of Costs and Charges, do meet in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath directed the said Committee to meet in Room 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to agree in the appointment of a Chairman:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records:—That three be the quorum.

PARTNERSHIP BILL.—[Bill 206.]

(*Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, it seemed to him an irregular proceeding to ask hon. Members to vote for the second reading of a Bill of which not the slightest explanation had been given. He was sure few Members expected the Bill would be reached, and had not, therefore, made themselves acquainted with its contents. Possibly the House might, in passing the second reading, be agreeing to a Bill most objectionable in its nature; and, in a like unexpected manner, the Bill might slip through its other stages. It behoved Members to be vigilant, and to allow no doubtful Bills to pass unchallenged; while a sufficient explanation of the Bill and its objects might smooth its passage and increase the prospect of its becoming law.

It being One of the clock A.M., the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow;* and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 18*th April,* 1888.

MINUTES.]—Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—Committee R.P.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Guardians of the Poor (Qualification) * [220].

Second Reading—Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister [2].

Withdrawn—Colonial Marriages * [130].

Provisional Order Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading*—Metropolitan Police * [212]; Local Government * [213]; Local Government (No. 2) * [214]; Local Government (Poor Law) * [215]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2) * [216]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3) * [217]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4) * [218]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5) * [219].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT (1887)—ARREST OF A MEMBER (MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter relating to the Arrest of a Member of this House:—

Castlerea,
17th April, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. William O'Brien, M.P. for North East Cork, was arrested on warrant on 14th inst., brought before me at Loughrea, county Galway, on

15th inst., and released on bail to appear at Loughrea Petty Sessions on Thursday 19th inst.

N. S. Townsend,
Resident Magistrate at Loughrea.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker, House of Commons,
London.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—[Bill 2.]

(*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Charles Cameron, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, that in moving the second reading of the Bill he did not desire to detain the House at any very great length—firstly, because it was no new subject, and he did not wish to deal with it in any narrow spirit, but on the broad ground of right and justice; and, secondly, because he knew there were many hon. Members of the House who desired to speak upon it, particularly his hon. Friend the Member for Battersea (Mr. O. V. Morgan) and his hon. Friend the Member for West Wolverhampton (Sir William Plowden), who had got Bills on a cognate subject with regard to India and the Colonies. Holding, as he did, that the Act of 1835 was entirely unjust, he thought it was the duty of those who supported the restriction now in force to show why that restriction should continue in Great Britain, when in every other country there was freedom of marriage between a widower and his deceased wife's sister. He believed—and he thought everyone in the House believed—that a marriage between a widower and his deceased wife's sister was neither against the Divine Law nor against the law of Nature, and he did not see why it should be forbidden by a simple human enactment. He did not suppose his hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), who was going to move the rejection of the Bill, would go into the old arguments of the much controverted texts of Scripture. Those texts were fairly abandoned in the debate which took place in 1884 on the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst). On that occasion they heard very little about those texts, and Colonel Milne-Holme, who seconded the rejection of the Motion, distinctly stated that he gave them up, and did not depend in the slightest upon them. He (Mr. Heneage) had said before, and he said again, that he did not see why those texts should ever have been depended upon, because if they affected anybody they must have affected those who relied upon the Old Testament solely—he meant the Jews themselves—and these marriages had always been sanctioned and encouraged by Jews, as they had also been encouraged by Mahomedans, in obedience to the Mosaic Law and to tradition. Now, what was the case in regard to these marriages previous to 1835? Marriages with deceased wives' sisters were constantly entered into. They were perfectly legal and in accordance with the Common Law. They were very seldom interfered with; very seldom any objection was taken to them. He was perfectly aware that such marriages were voidable if they were impeached, but they were not void at Common Law. A man might marry his deceased wife's sister and have a large family and die, and yet his widow would be looked upon as his legitimate widow and his children would be regarded as his legitimate children. Therefore, under the Common Law of the land, these marriages were for all intents and purposes relied upon as not likely to be impeached. They were entered into more or less under the 32nd of Henry VIII. There it was distinctly enacted that no reservation or prohibition, God's law excepted, should trouble or impeach any marriage without the Levitical degrees; and why was the Act of 1835 brought in? It was brought in because there was a considerable doubt with regard to the Canon Law, and to prevent these marriages being impeached, because it was disagreeable to some persons who had great influence at that time. The object of Lord Lyndhurst in bringing in that Act was not to forbid these marriages, but to prevent them, after a certain time, being impeached—to prevent a man who had married his deceased wife's sister having the fear of impeachment from the day of his marriage to the day of his death. But the Bill was considerably altered in the

House of Lords, and it was a very curious fact that, whilst the Bishops were willing to validate past marriages, they desired by Statute to make all such marriages in the future illegal. He supposed that by doing so they in some way appeased their consciences. Surely this was most inconsistent on their part. If they considered that the marriages were against God's Law and against the Canon Law, they ought never to have been any parties to have allowed an Act to be passed which would render past marriages of this kind legal; and if they believed such marriages were against the Common Law, why did they want an Act? Why were they willing to make such a miserable compromise in order to get a fresh Act placed on the Statute Book? He, therefore, maintained that for all practical purposes these marriages previous to 1835 were always allowable, and were contracted without any offence, and with very general consent amongst all classes of the people. But since 1835 there had been a different state of things; and he thought it was right to say that the House of Commons, to its credit, had no part or parcel in the wretched compromise which had been made. In the first place, they entirely repudiated this iniquitous and illogical bargain, and it was only on account of the late period of the Session—it was then August—that at a conference the House of Commons agreed to accept the Bill. They accepted the Bill, however, distinctly as a temporary Act, and on the condition that the whole question would be brought up again for consideration in the next Session of Parliament. The law was never accepted by the nation, and such marriages went on at the rate of 500 a-year, in spite of the Act, amongst most respectable classes of society, amongst people who had no other fault than that they desired to do what they believed was best for their children, and what they believed was in accordance, not alone with Divine law, but with the moral law. He knew that, in stating facts which occurred 50 years ago, he might be told that he could have no personal knowledge of them. It was true he had no personal knowledge of these facts, but he had gained it, as other hon. Members might, by referring to the debate which took place in the House in 1842, only seven years after the passing of the Act. Lord Francis Egerton, speaking with thorough knowledge of everything that had taken place, and in proposing the second reading of a Bill similar in almost all respects to that which he (Mr. Heneage) had the honour to have charge of, used these very important words—

> "It is upon the records of this House that an agreement was made, and a distinct understanding implied by all, and acknowledged most distinctly by those who spoke upon it, that the law was passed in its present shape, in consequence of the lateness of the period (August) of the Session of 1835; and it was distinctly understood and expressed that those who consented to it did not do so upon full and due deliberation of its ultimate bearings, but that it was a subject which called for further inquiry and consideration, and something almost like a promise was held out at an early period of the next Session that consideration should be given to it."

Further on in his speech, and speaking with regard to the effect of the Act of 1835 upon all classes in the country, Lord Francis Egerton said—

> "This law did not go forth with the authority of law consistent with the feelings of the Christian and Protestant communities of Europe—it did not carry with it that weight which secures to the statutes the obedience of all but the avowed and profligate law-breakers. I tell this House that that statute has subsequently been resisted and evaded by men of a very different description from such professed and profligate law-breakers, and I believe that I am entitled to say that it has been evaded to a large extent by men of all classes in this country, by persons of education, and by persons who had no other moral slur or taint upon their character."

Lord Francis Egerton was a man who knew what had been going on. He was a Member of the House and knew well the feelings of the country, and, therefore, he was entitled to be heard upon the question. But this expression of opinion of Lord Francis Egerton did not stand alone. As he (Mr. Heneage) had just now said, these marriages were taking place at the rate of 500 a-year, and the dissatisfaction throughout all classes in the country was so great that the Government in Office in 1847 were compelled to grant a Royal Commission to give full consideration to the whole question. Over this Royal Commission a very eminent Bishop presided, and it was recorded by them that they were fully satisfied that the Act had not had any effect in stopping these marriages, which, as he (Mr. Heneage) had said, were going on at the rate of 500 annually, and being contracted by persons of the highest standard of morality. But the Royal Commissioners did not confine themselves merely to this statement, because they said further in their Report that they considered that the feeling against these marriages was in a great measure founded rather on a vague and uninformed assumption that they were prohibited by God's Word than on a mature examination of the Scriptures or the law of the Church, and they were constrained to express the belief that the Statute had failed to attain its object, and also to express their doubt whether any measure of a prohibitive character would be effectual. He ventured to say that Bishop Lonsdale and his brother Commissioners were driven to this conclusion by the fact that these marriages had increased throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles from 500 to 1,000 annually. He contended that if this Bill were passed it would be of very great benefit to the poor and labouring classes. He might quote Cardinal Newman and Bishop Philpotts in support of that view, and here he might say that, although he was in charge of the Bill to-day, he had no personal interest in the measure, neither was he connected with any associations for the reform of the Marriage Laws. He seconded the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham in 1884; and in 1886 he was requested by many Members of the House—and especially by those Members who had great pressure placed upon them, those who directly represented the labouring classes—by his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham, his hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), as well as by Mr. Arch and others—to take charge of this Bill. He had always considered that this measure would confer greater benefit upon the labouring classes than upon any others, because, if there was one thing which struck magistrates, it was the bad effect of stepmothers upon children. He believed that the very best stepmother a child could have was the sister of its own mother. It was for that reason, more than any other, that he had taken great interest in this question for so many years past. But what was the present state of affairs with regard to this law? In all foreign countries, Protestants, Nonconformists, and Roman Catholics alike, allowed that these marriages were legal. These marriages were allowed to be contracted in every country except in the British Isles. In the United States they were legal; in Russia and in Germany they were legal; and although in France the Roman Catholics had to obtain the dispensation of the Pope, still such marriages were recognized as legal when once the dispensation of His Holiness had been procured. He did not suppose there was anyone in the House who would maintain that if marriages could be contracted with the dispensation of the Holy See they were illegal. If they were illegal, they could not be so contracted. It was only a question of their requiring that dispensation in the same way that mixed marriages required the dispensation of the Pope. He did not think that anyone would be prepared to say that mixed marriages were in any way illegal because they required that permission. In India the Protestants alone were prohibited by law from marrying a deceased wife's sister. The Natives contracted such marriages, and the Roman Catholics, under a recent decision, were permitted to contract such marriages. In the Colonies for years the different Legislatures had been passing laws legalizing these marriages, and such laws, when they had been passed, had received the Assent of the Queen in Council, and he asserted that that Assent would not have been granted if it was known that the marriages were illegal or against the Divine Law. But what a curious position the Colonists were in now if they came to England with their wives and children! Their wives were no longer recognized as their wives, and their children were no longer recognized as their legitimate children. As a matter of fact, a Colonist who had been married for years could on setting his foot on these shores at once abandon his wife and family and leave them to pauperism. At the Conference last year which was held at the Colonial Office there was a very strong and unanimous opinion expressed as to the desirability of recognizing, for all purposes, the validity of these marriages duly sanctioned by the Crown under the advice of the responsible Minister; and he thought the Colonists had a fair right to ask that that should be the case. These marriages were now contracted in 9,000,000 square miles of the British Empire, and in the British Isles alone were they illegal under the Act of 1835. He thought he had fairly shown that the law had never been accepted by the British people, and that these marriages took place still with the full sanction of public opinion. He went further, and asserted that they were right, and that they were of great benefit, especially to the poorer people. He believed that they would conduce in rural parishes to morality; and he was quite certain that they would be a very great advantage to the children who were, unfortunately, deprived of their mothers. The question was a very much larger one now than it was a few years ago on account of the Colonial aspect; but he would not enter upon the Colonial part of the question now, because the hon. Member for Battersea (Mr. O. V. Morgan) had a Bill upon that question, and the hon. Gentleman was desirous of speaking specially upon that subject. They had also got the revised edition of the Old Testament, so that he thought the Scriptural argument against the Bill must now be entirely abandoned by its opponents. He asked the House to pass the second reading of this Bill in a spirit of justice, and to thereby get rid of what he could not help calling the corrupt and iniquitous bargain of 1835, by removing a restriction which was not justified either by the Divine or moral law.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Mr. SALT (Stafford) said, he rose to move the rejection of the Bill; but he wished at once to say that in whatever he should say he should be guided by no feeling of bigotry or hostility to those who differed from him. He frankly acknowledged that there were difficulties in this case; indeed, he would go further, and say he had considerable sympathy with those persons who had themselves, for one reason or another, felt the law to be in any way hard. He must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) upon the moderate tone of his speech, but he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would quite understand him when he thought that his arguments were such as he could not altogether accept; he certainly could not accept the right hon. Gentleman's facts. Now, he not only appealed for quiet and friendly argument with those who differed from him on this question, but he argued that this was a question which might be considered in no Party spirit. For that appeal the circumstances of the time were exceptionally convenient. The Whig Party was a thing of the past, and if there were still any hon. Gentlemen calling themselves Whigs they were merely the ghosts of a departed enterprize. The Liberal Party was divided against itself, and the Conservative Party might be made the subject of a description which would be interesting, but which would take up too much time now. There was no single Party in the House which of itself commanded a majority, so that the moment was exceptionally favourable for asking men in all parts of the House and of all opinions to approach a subject of this character entirely apart from Party feeling. There was something to be said for an institution which, in fact, existed. He acknowledged that existence was not, like possession, nine points of the law, but existence was something; because, unless a law or custom or institution was so manifestly bad as to be condemned on all sides, there must be some reasonable ground given if it was to be discontinued. But if in regard to any particular institution or custom it was possible to go much further, and to say that such a law had been founded by the most deliberate opinion of persons responsible and capable of forming a judgment, and of acting upon it; if it had been, after consideration, accepted by men of great knowledge and of great authority; if it had been accepted by many societies in many countries; and if, further, it had become so far the custom and the law of the country that it had been embodied in the habits and ideas of the people; and if it was further shown that under such a law society had flourished and domestic purity had been established, then he said that law and custom stood upon a rock, and ought not to be altered without very strong reason. He was going to quote, and he hoped the House would forgive him if he quoted many authorities, in favour of the law which his right hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage) sought to change. The quotations were very interesting, because, although they varied on certain points, they all tended to one result. He would turn first to the law of the Church of England. The Church of England in its 99th Canon stated—

> "No person shall marry within the degrees prohibited by the laws of God and expressed in a table set forth by authority in the year of our Lord, 1563, and all marriages so made and contracted shall be judged incestuous and unlawful, and consequently shall be dissolved as void from the beginning, and the parties so married shall by course of law be separated. And the aforesaid table shall be in every Church publicly set up and fixed at the charge of the parish."

That was a well-known Canon of the Church of England, and that Canon was the law of the land, and had been such for very many centuries; it was the law of the land even before this Parliament existed. That was a very strong position, and it had been accepted and understood by the people. Under that law the people had lived, and under it they had been contented. He would now refer to a different Body altogether. Some hon. Members of the House considered that the Church of England was extremely bigoted and behind the times, but the law as laid down by the Presbyterian Church was just as distinct. What he was about to read was interesting, because it was the deliberately formed opinion, not of ecclesiastics only, but of laymen also assembled in council. The Westminster Confession of Faith said—

> "Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word of God, nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties so as those persons may live together as man and wife. The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own; or the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than her own."

The Westminster Confession of Faith was drawn up by a Conference of ecclesiastics and laymen between the years 1643 and 1647, and it was accepted by all the Presbyterian Churches. He took another Body of Christians, a Body for whom he had the greatest respect—namely, the Wesleyans. The Wesleyans were guided, as hon. Members knew, by certain Minutes passed in the Wesleyan Conference, and in the year 1841 three or four Minutes were passed, of which he would only read two. The Minutes were interesting, and they tended in the same direction as the quotations he had already made. The Minutes were—

> "That on the great New Testament principle of submission 'to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake' the Conference is solemnly of opinion that the members of our societies are bound by the law of Christ to conform themselves in all arrangements concerning marriage to the institutions of their country; and especially because in the very form of their enactment there is a national recognition of the authority of the Divine Will, as made known to mankind in the Holy Scriptures."

And—

> "The Conference, moreover, deems itself now called upon to declare that it is by no means comely nor of good report for members of our societies to repair to certain parts of the United Kingdom or to foreign countries, in the hope of there finding facilities for contracting marriages within the prohibited degrees, and without any intention of fixing their permanent residence in those countries."

That rule, as he had been informed after careful inquiry, was still in existence. The Wesleyan Conference was a Body for whom he had—and he had no doubt many hon. Members had—most sincere respect. Now, he took another Society of Nonconformist Christians, not so important as the Wesleyans, but still a Body whose history was one of very great interest and of no little importance in the annals of our country. Here was a Rule which was taken from *The Book of Christian Discipline* of the Society of Friends, and which was passed, he believed, in 1811—

> "This meeting is of the judgment that as compliance with the laws of the land in cases wherein conscience is not violated is an acknowledged principle of Friends, the Society cannot, consistently with this principle, allow in our meetings the passing of marriages which are not authorized by the law on the subject, and which are included in the degrees of consanguinity or affinity prohibited thereby."

The law of the Quakers was similar in this respect to that of other religious denominations. This regulation was passed quietly and deliberately, under no political excitement, and under no religious excitement: it was the result of the calm judgment of liberal-minded men, capable of forming an opinion and of understanding the question with which they had to deal. Now he turned to another great Body, a Body of enormous influence and weight in regard to this matter. The Body was of great importance in respect to this question because their influence and their power were not confined to this country, or to one country alone, but extended to all the countries of the world —he, of course, spoke of the Roman Catholics. He had here a letter which was written by Cardinal Manning and publicly read in 1882. He had been in communication with Cardinal Manning, and His Eminence had given him leave to read any letter of this character which he had published, saying that his opinion remained the same. Cardinal Manning put the case very clearly and nakedly. Speaking, of course, upon this subject, he said—

> "Such marriages are prohibited by the law of the Church, and are never permitted except with reluctance and to avert greater evils. The repeal of the prohibitory law which exists in this country would, in my belief, multiply indefinitely such marriages, and, what is still more to be deplored, break down one of the most vital securities for the sanctity and happiness of homes."

He (Mr. Salt) was bound to say he believed it was not the opinion of the Roman Catholic Church that these marriages were prohibited by the Divine Law, but that they were prohibited by the law of the Church, and that, he contended, was a very powerful authority in such a matter as this. Now he went to another Christian Church, of which, of course, they did not hear so much in this country, but still a Christian Church of enormous power and influence in the countries where its opinions prevailed — he spoke of the Eastern Church. He had in his possession a copy of a letter written by the Chaplain to the Russian Embassy in 1847. It was a simple statement of the law of the Eastern Church. The writer said—

> "In reply to your inquiry concerning the marriage of a widower with his deceased wife's sister, I have the honour to inform you that such a marriage shall be judged by the Eastern Catholic Church as unlawful, and cannot take place under any circumstances; and if so unlawfully contracted, the parties shall, by course of law, be separated under certain ecclesiastical penances."

That was perfectly distinct, and that law still existed. He might quote the laws of other Christian Churches. The Calvinists in 1567 declared—

> "Let no man marry his brother's widow, nor any woman him who was her sister's husband."

The Lutheran Church about the same time took the same view. In the Church of Holland, the translators appointed by the Synod of Dort in 1618-19 inserted this marginal note to Leviticus xviii., 16:—

> "From this law it necessarily follows that a woman who has been married with one brother may not after his death marry with another brother; and, upon the same principle, a man who has been married to one sister may not after her death marry the other sister."

He now took the Reformed Church of France. By the Ninth Canon of *The Book of Discipline,* adopted in 1559, that Church said—

> "It is not lawful for any man to marry the sister of his deceased wife; for such marriages are prohibited, not only by the laws of the land, but by the Word of God."

He (Mr. Salt) had to say, without wishing to guide the conscience or the action of any individual, that that was a tremendous consensus of opinion on the part of all the Christian Churches of the world. He now had recourse to quite another kind of evidence—he left Christianity and appealed to heathenism. It would be instructive to see what view one of the greatest heathen Empires in the world took of this question, and he would quote an authority which would not be accused of bigotry. Gibbon, in page 210 of Vol. IV. of his well-known *History of the Roman Empire,* said—

> "The profane lawgivers of Rome were never tempted by interest or superstition to multiply the forbidden degrees, but they inflexibly condemned the marriage of sisters and brothers; hesitated whether first cousins should be touched by the same interdict; revered the parental character of aunts and uncles, and treated affinity and adoption as a just imitation of the ties of blood."

That was a sentence written in Gibbon's peculiar style, but it showed clearly enough the laws which were passed in the time of Justinian, and threw considerable light upon the view that very able Ruler took of the social aspect of the question. He passed from the Emperor Justinian and Gibbon on Roman History to another period of history much nearer our time. He had here one authority which was especially interesting and perhaps instructive. It was the Code Napoleon, a Code which was passed in 1805, and passed by a man who, whatever else might be thought of him, had enormous administrative ability. It happened that in 1792, some 12 or 13 years before the Code was adopted, a law had been passed legalizing in France, so far as the Civil Law went, marriage with a deceased wife's sister. In 1805, when Napoleon and his advisers came to consider the laws of the country and to codify them in what was known as the Code Napoleon, they altered this law. And why? Because the alteration of the law in 1792 had proved to be so disastrous and so unsatisfactory. Napoleon altered the law on the distinct statement that the law of 1792 had brought trouble in families, and was the chief cause of the demands for divorce then before the Courts. That was the statement of the Minister of Justice. Another gentleman—Councillor Maleville—who was present at the time, declared that all the Courts of Justice in France testified against these marriages. Now that was very strong evidence, because it showed not only the result of the change, but also the opinion of a very great Ruler. He would now go to the authority of the British Parliament, and must quote as an argument in his favour the decision which was come to in 1835. He entirely disagreed with his right hon. Friend in the description he gave of the Act of 1835. Very able men had pronounced their opinion upon the subject. Lord Hatherley and Lord Cairns spoke upon this subject, and it appeared to him that the view they expressed seemed to be confirmed by the whole course of English history, both ecclesiastical and civil. It was this—that these marriages always had been void, and that Lord Lyndhurst's Act of 1835 was not to interfere with the legality or illegality of these marriages, but to deal with the operation of the Ecclesiastical Courts, which had become exceedingly inconvenient. The marriages were void, but the property of the children depended upon the action of the Ecclesiastical Courts. In fact, the Ecclesiastical Courts in England had some idea in their operation, such as that he had mentioned in regard to the Eastern Church where penance was inflicted, though he did not say that penance was carried out in this case. That he thought was the idea, and the operation of the Ecclesiastical Courts with regard to property naturally belonging to Civil Courts had become so inconvenient that Lord Lyndhurst took the opportunity of doing away with the ecclesiastical authority in this matter altogether and dealing with the matter as a civil one, seeing that these marriages by the Civil Law were void for the purposes of property. These marriages were always void, but Lord Lyndhurst's Act had not to do with the legality or illegality of the marriages as marriages. If they would read the Act carefully they would see that what that Act pointed at was the property of the children. It intended to declare that these marriages were void and always should be void with regard to property. That was the point, and that was what the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Heneage) and his advisers would not see. They said that this law related to marriage as it related to property. He did not want to give a lecture upon law, but what he wanted to do was to quote the Act for his own purposes. He maintained that the year 1835 was a year something like the present time, inasmuch as it closely followed upon a great Reform Bill; a time of great progress and change made men's minds prepared for change, and willing to accept change even of the most startling character. At that particular time a Liberal Minister, Lord Melbourne, was Prime Minister, and when the Act was passed the statesmen of the day did not take the opportunity of removing the disability from these marriages, as they very naturally might have done if they had thought it well to do so. The Act of 1835 was not the creation of a new illegality; but it was a distinct confirmation of an old illegality. That, he contended, was the character of that Act, though, of course, he did not expect everyone to agree with him. Now, how did this matter stand? He desired to put before the right hon. Gentleman what he had to get over before he could prove his case. The right hon. Gentleman had got some very difficult cases to deal with; he must prove that many men had in the past been wrong, Emperors, Statesmen, Ecclesiastics, Divines, Laymen—men who on several occasions gave their deliberate opinion on the subject, an opinion which was to have the force of law, and which was given under no excitement, political or otherwise. The right hon. Gentleman had also to show that many important assemblies had been wrong, many Councils, Conferences, and Parliaments. The Act of 1835 was not the only Act of Parliament which condemned the proposal the right hon. Gentleman now made. He thought it was a very strong case against the alteration that the opinion of many countries, many men, and many assemblies was opposed to the change suggested. But, leaving those authorities, he went to another and more difficult part of the question, and that was the Biblical argument. Of course, this was not the place in which it was desirable to occupy much time with an argument of that kind, but he had had communications from persons who were interested in this matter referring him especially to the well-known verse, the 18th verse of the 18th chapter of Leviticus, in which it was said that a man must not marry his wife's sister to vex her in her lifetime. He was bound to say that a weaker argument for a great change when a law had existed for centuries could scarcely be found than the arguments which was founded upon that particular passage. In the first place, it was an argument founded only upon implied permission, and that implied permission was all but contradicted by other parts of the same chapter, because the greater part of the prohibited degrees in Leviticus were degrees of consanguinity and of affinity. Moreover, if that verse were accepted as it stood in the authorized version, to give even a weakly implied permission to contract marriages of this kind, they must also accept the very strongly implied permission of polygamy. If this Bill were founded upon the 18th verse of the 18th chapter of Leviticus the right hon. Gentleman—if he wished to be logical—must insert in it a clause permitting polygamy as well as these marriages. He did not altogether speak unreasonably about that, because he had a letter among his papers describing a gentleman who did take exactly that view, and it was a perfectly logical view. That gentleman, he believed, was opposed to all restrictions upon marriage. But he was bound to say, with regard to the Biblical argument, that they ought not to rest themselves upon this particular verse and chapter of Leviticus, but upon the whole tone and character of the Bible. He confessed he had looked at the matter very carefully, and when he first looked into this argument with a view to the discussion of it, he had great doubts about the strength of the Biblical argument. He looked at it with quite an open mind—indeed, he was inclined to take the view which was taken of it by his Roman Catholic friends. But as the result of his inquiry he was bound to say—and it would not be right that he should take up the time of the House by showing why he arrived at the conclusion—that the result of his inquiry into the teaching of the Bible, and the peculiar circumstances in which the Levitical Law was given—religious, social, and political—was that there was a very strong Biblical argument against these marriages. That was his conviction, and he gave it for what it was worth. Certainly, the opinion he held very decidedly after careful consideration was held by many great and good men in the country. Now, there was another matter on which his right hon. Friend had touched, and on which he very naturally touched, and that was the position of the Colonies, and the Acts which the Colonies had passed. The right hon. Gentleman laid some stress upon the Queen having given consent to certain Acts passed by the Colonies. He (Mr. Salt) supposed that if Parliament ever passed this Bill the Queen would give her consent. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that that was a very poor argument indeed, and that it was an argument which really ought not to be used, because it imposed on people who did not know any better. It was not intended to have that effect, but it absolutely did have, because it made people who did not know better say—"Oh, the Queen and the Ministry have been spending hours in discussing this question, and they have at last given their consent to the change in the law." But, of course, the right hon. Gentleman knew as well as he did that the Queen would never withhold her consent from an Act passed by the Colonies, especially one affecting their own social arrangements, except in the most unusual and extraordinary circumstances.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that that was hardly the argument he advanced. He argued that the subjects of the Queen were placed in a very unfair position by being allowed to contract certain marriages under a law which had received the sanction of the Queen in the Colonies, and that when they came to this country they found themselves in the position that the wives were not considered wives, and that the children were not considered legitimate children.

Mr. SALT said, he had both the pleasure and advantage of hearing the right hon. Gentleman, who distinctly laid stress on the fact that the Queen consented to these marriages. That was one point—what the right hon. Gentleman had just said was quite another point. He frankly acknowledged it was a strong argument, and it was, no doubt, an inconvenience that there should be one law in the Colonies on this subject and another law in this country; but he reminded the House that there were many laws and many customs which existed in the Colonies which were by no means applicable to our ideas or requirements. He really saw no reason at all why, because a law was passed for the Colonies, we should *ipso facto* accept it. But, if that was his argument, the right hon. Gentleman did not go nearly far enough, because it was clear that if they were to say that because such and such law prevailed in the Colonies, or in any particular Colony—this law did not prevail in all the Colonies, but it did prevail in the most important Colonies—if the right hon. Gentleman said that because a law prevailed in the Colonies, therefore they were bound to pass the same law for the people of England, he must obviously bring an overwhelming argument to show that the law was beneficial and advantageous in the Colonies, and better in all respects than the law which existed in this country. But the right hon. Gentleman contented himself with a simple statement. He accepted the right hon. Gentleman's statement as evidence of his opinion, and he accepted it as tolerably fair in fact—it was not absolutely accurate in fact. If the right hon. Gentleman wanted them to adopt the Colonial Law, let him show not only that the law was good in the Colonies, but also good for us, and better than the law which prevailed in this country for our purposes. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Colonial Conference last year, and said that the decision of the delegates was in favour of an alteration of the law in this country. But there must have been two different reports of the same transaction; the information he had received was exactly contrary to that of the right hon. Gentleman. The matter was discussed, and either he or the right hon. Gentleman must have been afflicted with blindness or deafness, for he had got a very different report to the right hon. Gentleman. The matter was discussed at the Colonial Conference on the 14th of April of last year. There were 21 Colonial Representatives present, and out of this number only six were in favour of the change in the law. Sir Alexander Campbell, the Representative of Canada, said—

> "The same feeling which actuated the Canadians in altering their law induced them to respect the feeling of England. Neither he nor his Colleague (Mr. Fleming) had any instructions to represent that the Canadians desired any change in the law. They had altered their law to suit their own position, and were quite willing that the people of England should retain theirs until they saw a necessity for changing it."

They appeared to have got different documents, but he stood by his until he found it was really inaccurate; it certainly was absolutely at variance with the facts in the possession of his right hon. Friend. He might add that the Colonial Law was passed with a full knowledge of the Act of 1835, and of the law which had existed for generations and centuries before, and he could not help thinking that if there was any difficulty our Colonial cousins and friends were uncommonly well capable of taking care of themselves. The Colonists passed the law deliberately; they did it knowing the state of the law of England, and they did it understanding perfectly well what they were about. If any inconvenience arose—which he would deplore as much as anyone—the responsibility was not ours, but theirs. There was one other argument which his right hon. Friend discussed, and upon which he was afraid they could not get further than absolute divergence of opinion. He thought, perhaps, it was rather a divergence of opinion than of facts, although, even in this case, he was not very much enamoured of the right hon. Gentleman's facts. He spoke of the social aspect of the question. He had always voted against this Bill, because he believed it would be a great inconvenience and a great wrong socially. He believed that the passing of this Bill would result not in liberty, but in licence; he believed that real liberty consisted in maintaining the law as it at present stood. It was said in regard to the social aspect that it was a question which nearly concerned the children of the husband, and that the sister of the wife was the natural guardian of the children. He entirely agreed with the statement that the wife's sister was, in some cases—for instance, when the husband had no unmarried sister—the natural friend and guardian of the children; but if she was the friend and guardian of the children, and if supporters of this Bill wanted to make out their case, they must prove, and prove with some considerable certainty, that the sister-in-law or the aunt would be a better guardian of the children when she was also their stepmother. He happened to have among his papers a very interesting statement by a working man, who had made very great inquiries in this matter, and he said he knew of two cases—one in which the wife's sister married the husband, and then the children of the former marriage were very shortly afterwards turned out-of-doors; and in the other case, of a similar marriage taking place, the children refused to accept the aunt as mother. He (Mr. Salt) confessed he did not see why the aunt should be regarded as a better guardian if she married their father than she was before. They might say that this was especially a case for working men. Again he agreed it was; but, acknowledging and feeling as strongly as possible that it was a case of interest especially to working men, he had arrived at exactly a contrary conclusion to that of his right hon. Friend. He had some authority for this opinion, because a meeting of working men was held on the subject not very long ago. He would read a sentence or two from the speeches of two of the speakers. He was not responsible for the language if it was at all vigorous. The meeting was a meeting of the Church of England Working Men's Society, held in August, 1884, at the Cannon Street Hotel. One man said—

> "As far as this Society was concerned, whose members were all *bonâ fide* working men, they would do everything that lay in their power to prevent this obnoxious Bill being passed into law, and to expose the hollowness of the arguments brought to bear on this question by those who had charge of this Bill."

Mr. Salt

Another speaker said—

> "The assertion that the working classes were demanding this measure was simply humbug. It had not the slightest foundation in fact;"

and he went on to say that the law was passed for the convenience of certain rich men. He (Mr. Salt) gathered, from people who had taken considerable trouble in ascertaining the opinions of working men in the different parts of the country, that they objected to a change in the law upon the ground that they considered the present law right; because they considered the change intolerable and wrong; because they considered that a good guardian in the person of the aunt would be turned into a bad guardian in the person of the stepmother; because they considered the relationship of brother and sister-in-law would be destroyed; and they maintained that further changes would follow, such as marriage with nephews and nieces, and so forth. People who had inquired into the number of these marriages had found that many other marriages against the Law of Affinity had been contracted. For instance, it was found that a man had married his wife's daughter; that another man had married his brother's wife; and that another man had married his own sister. He should say that in ascertaining the number of these illegal marriages of affinity and consanguinity it had even been found that many kinds of marriages had been contracted—not only marriages with a deceased wife's sister; and this circumstance would supply an argument rather against than in favour of the Bill. There was another part of the social question which he would urge, and that was the rights of women. He felt very strongly that it would be most unfortunate if they took any step whatever to go back on the history of the world, and put a widow in a less honourable position than she occupied at the present moment. No suggestion had been made by the right hon. Gentleman that a wife should marry her brother-in-law. Any change in the position of the woman in this respect, any retrograde step which would affect the beneficial position that woman had acquired under the influence of Christianity and civilization, would, he thought, be most unfortunate in the interests of family and family ties. He thought it would be a great misfortune to many families if they deprived them of the happy relation of sister-in-law. A wife's sister was received into a family exactly on the same terms as a real sister. If this law were passed that beneficial relationship must pass away for ever. He need not describe what would happen; but it was obvious to everyone what would be the effect to his own happy English home—whether it be a rich or a poor one—if the sister-in-law no longer could come into the house to live on easy terms. Much had been said about hardship, but they must not argue as though every man were burning to marry his sister-in-law. It was nothing of the sort; the real hardship would be this if they passed the Bill—that whereas they might satisfy 2,000 or 3,000 persons, there were thousands and hundreds of thousands of families into which it would introduce, as experience had shown, a new element of doubt and distrust. He was afraid he had wearied the House by addressing it at such length; but as he had never spoken on this subject before he was anxious to say what he had to say. He thanked the House very respectfully for their kind indulgence. He objected to this Bill for the following reasons. First of all, that there was a great consensus of opinion on the part of responsible authorities, deliberately given, and of all the leading Christian Churches. Secondly, that the law, as derived from the teaching of the Old and of the New Testament, appeared to be against the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. Thirdly, that he believed that laxity in this matter would be far more injurious to true liberty, social progress, and domestic happiness than restriction, and was not wished for by the people. Fourthly, because he deprecated any retrograde step respecting the social right of woman; and, fifthly, because the law as it stood was a custom acknowledged and respected for many generations and centuries. He contended that the law ought not to be changed without very great cause being shown, and upon the grounds he had assigned he moved the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Salt.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he had no fault to find with the spirit in which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had addressed his remarks to the House; but, at the same time, he could not help thinking that the hon. Gentleman had seemed to carry them back to the days of the thumb-screw and faggots. The hon. Member's ancient authorities in favour of retaining the law as it stood at the present moment were really astounding. He had told them the opinions of Churches and Churchmen and Conferences, and of distinguished men at home and abroad, and the hon. Member had put it to them that surely all those authorities could not be wrong. Well, that did not at all follow, and those authorities—brilliant as they might be—were very likely indeed to be wrong. It had been proved over and over again that Parliament had been wrong at some time or other. As to the Church and Convocation, and all the other institutions whose opinions the hon. Gentleman had quoted, they were one and all close assemblies in which the voices, opinions, and desires of the people had no hearing and no advocacy. When they came to the House of Commons—where all opinions were ventilated and all classes were represented — they found a different state of affairs, for the House of Commons had always been dead against the theories and opinions which the hon. Gentleman had enunciated. He was informed that during the last 50 years there had been something like 70 Divisions in the House on the present Bill, and in all of them the result had been majorities in favour of the measure. Only four years back, on the last occasion on which the subject was before the House, when he had had the honour of moving the Motion, the proposal was carried by a majority of 111, which majority was made up of hon. Members on both sides of the House. Happily, it was not a political question, but was a subject on which they all had their independent opinions, paying no regard whatever to Party prejudices. If the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford meant to say that the other branch of Parliament had decided adversely to the views of the supporters of the measure, then he agreed with him; but, at the same time, he would like to ask him what representative capacity the other House of Parliament had in the country? It was a body of landowners and Churchmen. The Church was strongly represented there by the voice of the Bishops, but the voice of the people was never heard, and, unfortunately, little regard was ever paid to it. The hon. Member had quoted the opinions of some persons who, he said, were working men, upon this point; but it would have been far more interesting to the House if he had given them the opinion of the working men in his own constituency upon the question. The next time the hon. Member spoke upon this subject, would he be kind enough to give them the opinion of his own constituency? The hon. Member had quoted the opinions of the Established Church, and also the opinion of a body called "The English Working Men's Church Defence Society," whose headquarters were not, he thought, situated in the hon. Gentleman's constituency.

Mr. SALT desired to say that since he had been a Member of the House of Commons he had only received one communication with reference to this subject from his constituents, and that single communication was not in favour of relaxing the law, but of making it more restrictive. It was true that some persons representing the Society promoting the Bill had been canvassing in his constituency without his knowledge or consent, and had been asking approval of the measure by means of sending out postcards.

Mr. BROADHURST: Yes; but the hon. Gentleman, it must be noticed, had not told them the result of that canvass.

Mr. SALT said, the result was that a very large number of his constituents answered the post cards in favour of the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), but they did it upon statements and arguments which were thoroughly one-sided. The ingenuity of the secretary to the Society by which the Bill was promoted was made manifest in the matter of those postcards; but he did not think that such action would benefit the cause. No cause advocated in that way was likely to be benefited, for, to his (Mr. Salt's) mind, the action of that gentleman went near indeed towards being a breach of Privilege. He did not mention this in his speech, as he did not wish to say anything derogatory to any Society with which the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Bill might have acted. The conduct and character of the Society in question, and the way in which its business was conducted, was very peculiar.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that the hon. Gentleman had now been led to make the admission that there were a considerable number of favourable replies as the result of the canvass in his constituency.

An hon. Member: A very large number.

Mr. BROADHURST: A very large number. Yes; and he thought if they put a reasonable and liberal interpretation upon that very large number, it would mean that the replies in favour of the measure were those of a very considerable majority of the hon. Gentleman's constituents. Now, he (Mr. Broadhurst) did not know whether he should be in Order in going into this matter; but the hon. Gentleman had said that the secretary to the Society to which reference had been made had been down into his constituency without his knowledge or permission or leave. Well, he (Mr. Broadhurst) must say that this was the first time he had ever heard a question raised as to the right of an English citizen to enter any English constituency for the purpose of educating it, or of ascertaining public opinion in it upon any subject under discussion in the country. As to its being a breach of Privilege, surely the hon. Member was joking when he wished to represent it as a breach of Privilege for one citizen to speak to another upon a question of this kind. Would the House allow him (Mr. Broadhurst) to give some evidence as to the opinion of the country upon this subject? He had the honour of sitting for three different constituencies in that House in the course of eight years.

An hon. Member: They will not have you twice anywhere.

Mr. BROADHURST said, the hon. Member for Essex was good enough to say that they would not have him twice anywhere; but he would warn the hon.

Gentleman to mind that he (Mr. Broadhurst) did not take his seat next. He had the honour of sitting for three constituencies, all of which were typical working class constituencies, and even the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) would not deny that proposition. He had sat first for Stoke. In the Parliamentary borough of Stoke, under the old system, he had received a requisition signed by 25,000 capable persons, requesting him to take this subject up and bring it before the House, as he had been very reluctant to add to his work at that time, and 10,000 of those signatures were those of women of full age. Stoke was within a very short distance of the constituency the hon. Member for Stafford represented, and into it an English citizen had ventured to go without the hon. Gentleman's knowledge and permission in order to discuss this subject. Surely it was a most alarming liberty which had been taken with the town of Stafford, and he (Mr. Broadhurst) had no doubt that the hon. Member and the House would hear more of it before they had finished with this subject. Then he had had the honour of sitting for Bordesley, which was another typical working man's constituency. It would be difficult, perhaps, to find a constituency, consisting more thoroughly of working class, wage-earning people than Bordesley. Well, in that Division there had never been, so far as he knew, a single protest against this Bill. On the contrary, he believed that the overwhelming mass of the people were in favour of it. He now had the honour of sitting for a still larger constituency, and one composed essentially of the working classes. There were 15,000 voters in the whole of that enormous constituency, and there had never been a Petition, so far as he was aware, presented to the House, or a letter written to any hon. Member, opposing the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby. He would come now to a still larger authority, which had a right to speak for the people on this subject—he referred to the Trades' Union Congress. The Trades' Union Congress was one of the most pure and thoroughly representative institutions of any kind in Great Britain. It was a representative institution elected and paid for by the Trades Unions themselves—and had a right to speak upon trade and social questions for, at least, 750,000 people. Well, that Congress was a non-political body. Trades' Unions were non-political; they did not discuss political questions. There were no party divisions arising at their annual gatherings; but, on the subject of the Bill now before the House, he believed he was correct in saying that every delegate attending the Congress had signed Petitions once or twice in favour of the proposal. It was about 12 months back, within a few days, that he had had the honour of introducing a deputation to the Prime Minister—a deputation consisting of something like 100 trade delegates, coming from all parts of Great Britain—England, Scotland, and Wales. They went to Lord Salisbury to ask him to give facilities—as head of the Government during the last Session—for the passing through the House of Commons of the Bill which his right hon. Friend was moving to-day. He could not imagine it possible to bring more conclusive or more substantial evidence before the House in favour of this proposal than he had done in mentioning the various authorities of which he had spoken. The hon. Member for Stafford based most of his arguments upon the alleged fact—and he (Mr. Broadhurst) feared it was in the main true—that the great body of the Church was opposed to this measure. But they were not all opposed to it. There were some ecclesiastical authorities who had passed the darkness which had surrounded them on this and some other questions, and had now come forward to assert their independence and advocate views which were in harmony with the present day and with the wishes and desires of the great mass of the people. In 1884, when he had the honour of moving the Motion to which he had already referred, he had received a letter from a very great and good man —a Bishop of the Church of England—a Bishop who was then in New Zealand, but who was still as much a Bishop of the Church of England as was any Bishop resident at this moment in this country. That right rev. Prelate had written him a letter entirely approving of his Motion, and wishing every success to the proposal. He had said—

> "I hold that this is a matter that should be left to a man's conscience. All the cases that have come to my knowledge have been cases in

which the proceedings were desirable from every point of view, and in the results have been satisfactory."

Surely that opinion should carry some weight with hon. Members who would be otherwise inclined to rely upon Church opinion supporting them in opposition to this proposal. He (Mr. Broadhurst) had a strong desire not to occupy too much time, otherwise it would be easy to quote many other Church authorities, both of eminence in the Church, and also of laymen belonging to the Establishment. The hon. Member for Stafford had spoken very strongly about the opposition of the Catholic Church to this proposal. That might be true partly—he did not think it was as true of the Catholic Church as it was of the English Protestant Church. He was informed on very high authority that where these marriages were contracted in the Catholic Church, and the local priest made application that they might be confirmed, that His Holiness the Pope had seldom, if ever, refused such an application. In France, which he supposed was the most Catholic country of the world—["No, no!"] Well, almost the most Catholic country in the world—["No, no!"] What did hon. Members mean? France professed the Catholic faith, and whatever religion there was in France was Catholic, as the National Church was Catholic. The hon. Member for Essex showed such a determination to oppose the Bill that he was even reluctant to admit well-known and established facts bearing upon it. France, he repeated, was a Catholic country, and he was informed that there were from 1,000 to 1,500 marriages every year in that country of the kind which it was sought to legalize by this Bill. It was incorrect to say, therefore, that the Catholic Church was opposed to the Bill of his right hon. Friend. On the contrary, many great and good Catholics were rather on the side of the promoters of the Bill; and the head of that Church, as he had already stated, did not refuse his sanction when applied to for the confirmation of these marriages. If the facts were as he had stated them, then the argument from the Protestant Church point of view and the Catholic Church point of view fell to the ground, and ought not to be brought forward again in support of the Amendment moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford. And at this point, in case he should forget it, he (Mr. Broadhurst) should like to enter his earnest and solemn protest against the manner in which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford had mentioned this class of marriages. He had mentioned them in connection with marriages which all civilization condemned. He had mentioned them in connection with incestuous marriages and with polygamy. He (Mr. Broadhurst) repudiated the suggestion with scorn. He contended that no hon. Member of the House ought to associate marriage with a deceased wife's sister with the class of marriages with which the hon. Member had associated them, and to which he had referred. It was an insult, a gross insult, and wrong to thousands of men and women who had contracted this marriage, believing it to be good in every respect, and as virtuous and as moral as any marriage that could be entered into. Now, he would appeal to hon. Gentlemen to-day to support the Bill, and not to be led away by the fanatical appeals of hon. Members who had opposed it, and who he was afraid were about to oppose it, and whose observations he had no hope of finding in a different strain, or being based upon more reason or having regard to more wisdom than on former occasions. He (Mr. Broadhurst) asked them to do this act of right and justice to many thousands of their fellow-countrymen. Neither the Church of England nor the Westminster Association nor Convocation, nor their conferences nor other branches of Protestantism, had any right whatever to stand between a man and woman in this relationship and wishing to contract this moral and justifiable union. This act of marriage was, perhaps, one of the most sacred acts of our secular life, and, as the Bishop of Nelson had truly said, it was a matter which, so long as it outraged no natural law, should be left entirely to the man's conscience, and to the desire of the man and the woman who were parties to the engagement. The hon. Member for Stafford seemed to imagine that there would be no injustice done by withholding permission for these marriages—that there would be no great harm done by the Bill—that there was no strong desire on the part of widowers to have the sisters of their late wives to act as second mothers to their children. But it was his (Mr. Broadhurst's) opinion, from his experience, that the Bill would be of enormous advantage to people so unfortunately situated. He would ask hon. Members if they could for a moment imagine a poor working man engaged in his business from 5 o'clock in the morning to 6 or 8 or 9 at night away from his home full of difficulties and trials? Under the best conditions of life he would ask hon. Members to imagine the position of this poor man when suddenly left with the great care, without a mother, to look after the interests of a large and young family. He would ask hon. Members where such a man could more naturally look for succour and help and guidance and nursing and training for his children, having no means to purchase and provide such training out of his own income—to what quarter and what direction could a man more naturally look than to the family of his late wife? There was no more natural direction, there was no more proper, just, and wise direction in which a man could look for assistance of this kind than towards the relatives of his late wife, and even to take his late wife's sister, if both agreed, into union as a second mother to his family. He did not think there could be any doubt as to the desire of the people on this subject. Parliaments, as the hon. Member for Stafford had said, had denied it; Convocation had denied it; the Westminster Association 300 years back or about that time had denied it and said it was very wrong; and a great many other authorities had denied it as a wicked thing to do. But what did Parliament exist for? What was the justification for the presence of hon. Members in that Assembly unless it was to guidance and help and effect to give the opinions and desires of the people when those opinions and desires were based upon justice and reason? It was the duty of Parliament to give effect to them, and both sides of the House had recognized that duty—neither one side more than the other, but all sections of the House had recognized this duty on 60 or 70 occasions within the last 50 years in carrying the proposal by a majority in the House of Commons, and it was only across the way that hitherto any difficulty existed in the way of this measure becoming law. He sincerely trusted that the House would that day carry the second reading of the Bill by such a decisive majority that it would have its effect on the other House of Parliament, and induce blind and prejudiced opponents of the proposal to suspend their opposition, and allow this Session to register upon the list of its works this great act of right and justice to many thousands of their fellow-countrymen and women.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, that he regretted the tone of much that had been said by the hon. Member who had just sat down. Many of his observations were calculated to introduce into the debate a tone of bitterness and passion which would be highly undesirable. The subject before them had been so threshed out in successive Sessions of Parliament that it was hardly possible to say anything new upon it. He recognized this, but at the same time he thought it right to reply briefly to the arguments which had been adduced by the supporters of the Bill. The first prominent argument of the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) was that the existing law had been extensively disobeyed, and that Parliament should relieve those who had gone counter to the law and place them in the position of legitimate union which they desired to occupy. Such an argument appeared to him to be inadmissible. That people, however high their character, should choose to disregard the law, thereby placing themselves in a position of great difficulty and embarrassment, could not be held to constitute a sufficient reason for altering the law. The case was analogous to those which presented themselves when the Vaccination Laws, for example, were opposed to the feelings of some section of the population or to their conscientious convictions. It did not follow that a law must be altered because it was disregarded by persons whose convenience or scruples it did not suit. The spirit manifested by the Wesleyan Conference was the spirit that ought to govern all law-respecting citizens—namely, that as long as the law was not in conflict with a higher law it ought to be obeyed. Another of the right hon. Gentleman's arguments took the form of an attack upon the legislation of 1835, which he characterized as a corrupt and iniquitous bargain. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of it as effecting an alteration in the law—as making unlawful marriages which were lawful before. This, however, was a misrepresentation of the facts. The law previously to 1835 was in conformity with the Canon Law of the Western Christian Church. The law was that incestuous marriages were only voidable, the Courts of Law regarding these marriages not so much as acts of which the civil power had a right to take cognizance, as acts which were sinful in themselves, and which the Ecclesiastical Law ought therefore to deal with. According to the practice which grew up in the Ecclesiastical Courts, a suit for the voidance of an incestuous marriage had to be instituted during the lifetime of both parties, [the guilty relation being at an end after the death of one of them. This was the principle of the law of the Ecclesiastical Courts, and it applied to a marriage with a sister by blood just as much as to a marriage with a wife's sister. To speak of the Statute of 1835 as altering in any way the previous law of the country was to misapprehend entirely the nature of the change then effected. The recital in the Statute made the law perfectly clear. Whether it was wise or not he did not think it necessary to argue at the present moment, but it was clear that if he was right in stating the purport of the law the right hon. Member had misled the House as to what happened in 1835. The change in that year arose out of what, perhaps, he might call the prejudice then growing up against the Ecclesiastical Courts. The Act made practically no difference in the principle; it simply dispensed with the intervention of the Ecclesiastical Courts. That was the only difference made. Then the next argument was that the deceased's wife sister was "the fittest" successor, the fittest person to take charge of the children, and it was explained that not to allow these marriages was not to allow the advantages which would accrue to widowers. No doubt, any person united in ties of relationship to the children of the dead woman would be more likely to care for them than a strange woman. This principle would extend to the wife's mother or daughter or aunt. If it was good for one of these degrees of affinity it was good for them all. It seemed to him that in order to secure this contingent benefit they would lose the whole advantage of the affection and assistance of the sister during the lifetime of the wife. They would sacrifice the assistance which a wife's sister gave on all occasions when the wife was unable to attend to her household, and which she was now able to give without reproach or suspicion. All these opportunities and services would be lost and gone. Then the right hon. Gentleman had cited foreign countries, and he went so far as to cite the Natives of India. He was bound to say that a great many of the authorities did not impress him deeply. He did not feel constrained to alter the law because a number of idolatrous Natives allowed unions of this sort. He did not feel constrained to alter it by the example of foreign countries. He could not shut his eyes to the marriages which were now allowed there, and once more the argument of the right hon. Gentleman proved too much. He came more closely to the point when the Colonies were quoted. That was an argument worthy of consideration—that these marriages were legal in the Colonies, whereas, when the parties came here, the marriages were treated as invalid and incestuous. But it must be pointed out that in the Colonies they contracted these marriages with their eyes open. It could hardly be maintained that because Mahomedans practised polygamy, therefore when they came here all their wives beyond the first should be recognized. They had, as they knew, Mahomedans coming here with more than one wife, but here the wives after the first were treated as no wives at all. The legitimate wife was the first one. That might be a hardship for the Mahomedan gentleman, but it was a hardship with which there was not much sympathy felt by any Member of that House. But because it was a hardship they did not proceed to alter the law. He thought the hardship of Colonial couples was a very small one, and although the argument based on Colonial practice deserved some weight, it fell far short of the weight which the right hon. Gentleman seemed disposed to attribute to it.

He thought, on the other hand, that the weight of the argument was enormously on the other side. The right hon. Gentleman had absolutely misstated the facts as to foreign countries. It was inaccurate to say that in Roman Catholic countries these marriages were lawful. They were prohibited on the ground that they were incestuous. It was perfectly true that with the system of the Canon Law which prevailed in Catholic countries dispensations were granted in rare cases; but except in exceptional cases and for peculiar reasons these marriages were prohibited. Again, when the right hon. Gentleman rested on these dispensations his argument went too far. With regard to the speech of the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), he imported a passion into the discussion when referring to his hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) which was new to the debate. He referred to the working classes, and he said that the passing of this Bill would add to the happiness of their daily life. Here he must differ from the hon. Gentleman. If the argument of authority were appealed to, nobody could deny that the practice and opinion of Christian nations for many centuries had regarded these marriages as illegal. They had been condemned on various grounds, and the argument of authority could be retorted against hon. Gentlemen who supported this Bill with irresistible force. He agreed, however, that it was not conclusive, and that the hon. Member for West Nottingham was entitled, if he thought fit, to treat it with contempt and subordinate the authority of Synods and other Christian Bodies to that of Trade Unions; but when they were dealing with this subject of authority they must not disregard the accumulated opinion of many centuries. Another argument that was adduced by one hon. Gentleman was the condition of the children of these marriages. No doubt, everyone felt the greatest sympathy with those who, through no fault of their own, were affected with a certain amount of social discredit by reason of their parents' acts; but he need not remind the right hon. Gentleman opposite that, in spite of all the arguments that had been brought to bear upon Parliament, the English Parliament had absolutely refused to let into the law the charitable principle that subsequent marriage should make children born before marriage legitimate.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that he had only referred to the children of parties who had been married in the Colonies.

Mr. MATTHEWS, continuing, pointed out that this Bill dealt not only with future marriages, but sought to make past disobedience to the law good from the beginning. He believed that the opposition to this Bill rested mainly upon the fact that its opponents believed such marriages to be forbidden by Scriptural or Divine Law. Hon. Gentlemen must be aware that large bodies of sincere Christians did rely upon the Scriptural argument. ["No, no!"] Of course, he did not expect the hon. Member for West Nottingham to agree with him; but he believed the great mass of believing persons in this country relied upon that argument. But it was not an argument that was suitable to the atmosphere of the House, because it depended on difficult questions of interpretation, which could not be discussed in the House, and there was no common basis for argument between those who felt the Scriptural authority and these who denied it. Still, he thought no wise legislator could ignore the existence of that strong religious sentiment. It would be most unwise for the House to shock the religious feelings of so many in order to give even a lawful and permissible liberty to a few. After all, there were plenty of women in the world, and this necessity for a man to marry his deceased wife's sister was not so urgent that it would be worth while, for the sake of securing the right to a few, to shock the honest and conscientious scruples of a large section of the community. The hon. Member for West Nottingham had said that it behoved those who wished to enforce a prohibition to show some reason for it; but he challenged those who supported the Bill to produce any social and secular reasons which were applicable to cases of consanguinity which would not be equally applicable to the case they were now considering. Prohibitions were essential in order to keep family life sweet and wholesome. It was by means of prohibitions that family life, as it existed in this country, was maintained, and in this connection he declined to resort to the example of foreign countries. He submitted to the House the view that the exigency of the social habits and tastes of this country made the husband a member of the family of his wife, and the wife a member of the family of her husband. He believed that Englishmen always regarded their wife's sister as their own sister, and derived from the companionship of their wife's sister all the advantages of family affection. It would be a fatal mistake on the part of the House of Commons to narrow the circle of those family affections from which passion was excluded, and so to put an end to those family relations which had hitherto existed to the infinite advantage of society and social life. If once the prohibition in this case were removed, all impediments of affinity would be broken down. He was not prepared to extend the principle of this Bill to the other cases of affinity. On these grounds he, in his own name only, and not in any sense on behalf of the Government, intended to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

SIR JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), in his able and moderate speech against the Bill, had furnished one of the strongest arguments for it when he quoted the letter of Cardinal Manning. Cardinal Manning, in that letter, stated that the Roman Catholic Church allowed marriage with a deceased wife's sister, but allowed it with reluctance, and only to avert a greater evil. That statement afforded the very strongest reason for passing the Bill. What was the consequence of the existing state of the law? An enormous amount of immorality—sometimes unconsciously and sometimes consciously—was practised through the operation of the law. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had said that they ought not to change the law because men chose to break it. That was, no doubt, a valid argument in a great number of cases—cases in which the law had public opinion beside it; but it was not so in a case where it was opposed to the feelings and wishes of the community. The right hon. Gentleman, throughout his speech, had applied the term "incestuous" to those marriages. He had called them incestuous marriages; yet, at the same time, he had told them that the Roman Catholic Church only forbade them as a matter of discipline, and allowed them by dispensation. If the Catholic Church allowed those marriages, what became of the argument as to their incestuousness? The hon. Member for Stafford had quoted a number of authorities to show that those marriages were incestuous. He had also quoted the Levitical Law. He (Sir John Simon) had believed that arguments against the measure, based on the Levitical Law, had been long ago abandoned. They were certainly abandoned in the last Parliament and thrown over as untenable, and hon. Members who were opposed to the Bill had founded their arguments not on the Levitical Law, but upon social considerations. With regard to the Scriptural argument, he would venture to remind the House that that Levitical Law was given to the Jews as part and parcel of their national polity—not as a mere theoretical expression, but as an absolute, positive law to be practised and obeyed. But what had been the usage of the Jewish people upon the subject?—and he wished the House to remember that that usage had not sprung up in a time of degeneracy and corruption, but at the time when the prophets and the inspired teachers were beside the people to guide and direct them, and to reprove them if they went wrong. The Jewish people were the interpreters, the authorized interpreters, of that law. And what had been their interpretation of it? Those marriage had come down among the Jewish people from those times to the present. When the Royal Commission, in 1847, sat to inquire into the question, the Chief Rabbi, who gave evidence, said that these marriages were not only not considered as prohibited, but were distinctly understood to be permitted. In answer to another question, the Chief Rabbi said that his experience of Oldenberg and Hanover, before he came to England, was that those marriages invariably proved happy. Passing from the ecclesiastical authorities, he (Sir John Simon) would quote the opinion of a person of eminence, for whose opinion he had a higher respect than for any of the ecclesiastical opinions which had been quoted. He referred to Mr. Justice Storey. He was a great jurist, a man of large, philosophical mind—a man of the world, and acquainted with human life, and not shackled by the miserable pedantry of the schoolmen. Mr. Justice Storey had said that nothing was more common in most of the States of America than second marriage with a deceased wife's sister; and, so far from being doubtful as to their moral tendency, they were amongst the best of marriages, and never in his (Mr. Justice Storey's) life had he heard the slightest suggestion against them founded upon moral or domestic considerations. He thought that that authority was worth all the ecclesiastical authorities which had been quoted. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had said that the purity of our social and domestic life had been established by the present law, and that our social and domestic purity would suffer, perhaps be destroyed, by the alteration of the law. But was the House to understand that there had been no purity of domestic life before Lord Lyndhurst's Act of 1835? The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had said that the law was not altered in 1835; but the right hon. Gentleman had made a distinction without a difference. What was the law before 1835? The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the marriages were not then void, but voidable only, by the Ecclesiastical Courts, in the lifetime of the parties. The Act of 1835 made them absolutely void. They were told that the Canon Law was the foundation of the English law as regarded these marriages, and that upon that law had been built up the domestic purity of England. But what was the Canon Law? The Canon Law upon that subject said that a man's sister-in-law was his sister. The Canon Law might be very wise and very subtle; but the Canon Law in that particular was not true. A man's sister-in-law was not his sister, and to say so was a misrepresentation which he would call a falsehood but that he did not wish to offend any man's feelings. Those marriages prevailed in almost every country in Europe; they prevailed in America; and coming to his own communion, the Jews, they prevailed among them; and there were no people amongst whom domestic life was more free, and at the same time purer, than among the Jews. Social life between a man and his wife's family, with the Jews, began as soon as the man was engaged to the girl. He was received at once as a member of the family, and from that time his intimacy with the family was like that of a relative. He ventured to say that never in his life had he heard of a single instance in which domestic life had become impure or unhappy, or where there had been a suspicion of jealousy on the part of a Jewish wife in consequence of that intercourse, or because of the possibility of a marriage between her sister and her husband after her death. As to the argument that the measure would deprive children of the care of the sister of their deceased mother, he asked hon. Members who had put forward that argument whether public opinion would not be strongly against a sister-in-law who remained long in the house of a brother-in-law after the death of his wife? It was said they had no right to shock the feelings of any considerable number of the community, and he agreed in that opinion; but, on the other hand, the rest of the community ought not to be overridden by a law founded on the Canons of a Church of which they were not members, and which they repudiated. There were, at least, as many Nonconformists in this country as there were Churchmen, and a considerable number of religious-minded men in this country were opposed to this law. He could quote opinions to that effect expressed by Dissenting ministers who were examined before the Select Committee of 1847. Much as he respected the Church of England, he objected to be governed by its Canons. It was the duty of those who supported the prohibition to make out a case for it, for it was the right of every man that he should enjoy complete freedom, limited only by the condition that he should not disturb the freedom and the rights of others. They had no right to interpose between a man and that which he deemed best for his happiness and the interests of his children. Under the present law, a widower, if he desired to marry again, must break off all association with the family of his wife, to whom he might have become attached by affection, and must seek a stranger for his wife, to whom the name of his former wife must never be mentioned. Her memory must be buried in the grave. It was a cruel and inhuman thing to drive him into this position when he had no children; but where there were children requiring the care of a mother the case was much worse. An instance had been mentioned of a deceased wife's sister having turned the children out-of-doors; but he could give many cases in which a strange woman, who had married a widower, had turned all the children out of the house, and sent them to get on as best they could. He had known of cases in which ladies in their dying moments had entreated a sister to remain with the children and wed the husband. Was it not abominable that women who devoted their lives and affections to a dead sister's children should be stamped as mistresses and persons guilty of incest? This state of the law was revolting to the natural feelings of all whose judgment was not warped by prejudices engendered by ecclesiastical absurdities. There was no ground for this prohibition, and no harm would come to society if the Bill became law. On the contrary, great good would be done in a vast number of cases where injury prevailed in consequence of the present law; and society would be all the better for such a just, wise, and proper measure.

Mr. E. B. HOARE (Hampstead) said, that in rising to oppose the second reading of this Bill he might lay himself open to a charge of bigotry and of having feelings that were seared; but that charge he must incur and bear it as best he could. But he hoped that the charge of bigotry would be in part withdrawn when he said that he could not argue this point entirely on the text of Scripture. He feared that his inexperience would lead him into many difficulties if he tried to construct a Marriage Law for this country on the basis of the Old Testament. But he could not accept the position that feeling alone should decide the question, and he would, therefore, ask the House to look at it on the simple and, perhaps, low ground of expediency. He believed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) would be in accord with him in saying that an alteration of the Marriage Law was inadvisable unless good and sufficient reasons were given for it; and the question was, were there sufficient reasons for the change? The three reasons put forward were, first, that there were many men who desired to marry their wives' sisters, and that it was a serious hardship upon them to be prevented from doing so. Secondly, that the deceased wife's sister was the best person to look after the children of the first marriage; and, thirdly, that this form of marriage prevailed in the Colonies and in the United States of America. He was rather surprised to hear the United States quoted in the House of Commons as a country to be followed in the matter of marriage law. What he had read and heard on the subject was confirmed during the short time he had spent in America—namely, that the Laws of Marriage in some of the States of the United States were not such as ought to be followed in this country; nor were the Divorce Laws there prevailing such as would receive support in that House. The right hon. Gentleman stated that there were 9,000,000 miles of the British Empire in which this custom prevailed. But the question was not over how many square miles it prevailed, but how many people dwelt in the different areas. It was said that it was a hardship on our Australian Colonies that a man lawfully married in New South Wales should come to this country to find that his wife and his children were not recognized as legitimate. It seemed that this argument might be reduced almost to absurdity by a consideration of numbers. There were 4,000,000 people living in the Australian Colonies. Take the most populous Colony of New South Wales, and there were barely 1,000,000 people living in that very large territory. How many of these were men of marriageable age, and how many of them wished to marry their deceased wife's sister; how many had married them, and how many of those who had wished to come home to settle in England? He believed the number would be found to be so small that the hardship involved would hardly justify the alteration of the Marriage Law of England. He would reduce the question of hardship to those who wished to marry their deceased wife's sister to numerical proportions. How many men were there who wished to do that? Hon. Members might, perhaps, have known one or two persons in the course of their lives to whom the law had been a grievance. The proportion must be infinitely small, for they must remember the undoubted fact that the ladies had a veto in this matter, and it might be in the personal cognizance of some hon. Members that in matters of matrimony that veto was occasionally exercised. Then how many men were there desirous of marrying their deceased wives' sisters, whose deceased wives' sisters wished to be married to them; and, finally, how many of those who were able to marry their deceased wives' sisters were prevented from doing so by the law? Surely the argument of hardship would be reduced to its smallest force by naming that small number. But as to hardship, what were they to say of the hardship of a man having a drunken wife, or, again, of the case of one who had married a mad wife? These cases were numerous; but the law gave no relief of the hardship, and he felt that the law was right. It was said that this change of the law was asked for in the interest of the children; but it struck him that their interest was really bound up in the continuance of the existing law. He agreed with the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Sir John Simon) that it was an unwise thing for a sister-in-law to live in her brother-in-law's house for a long time after the decease of his wife; but he said that this state of affairs was very much brought about by this agitation, and not only that, but if it continued she would not be able to live there at all unless "the funeral baked meats furnished forth the marriage banquet," and in the former case she could be of no service whatever to the children of her sister. He ventured to say that no sufficient ground had been shown for any change in the existing law. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) said that it was very desirable that the opinion of women should be taken in this matter. He (Mr. E. B. Hoare) had received a letter from a lady residing in his district to say that this question should be postponed until she and her sisters were able to exercise the right of voting. There was force in this; the view was a new one, and he agreed with it. It seemed to him that until women were able to express their opinion by their votes they should not alter the law. On these grounds he proposed to support the hon. Member for Stafford in his opposition to the Bill.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) said, that in Canada, Australia, and the other Colonies and Dependencies, there was a Christian population of something like 25,000,000, or two-thirds of the population of the United Kingdom. He was surprised at the slighting reference of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews)—who was, he (Mr. O. V. Morgan) believed, by birth a Colonist—to the condition of social life in the Colonies, and it was evident to him that the right hon. Gentleman was in a state approaching to utter ignorance with regard to the condition of Colonial society, because he implied that in the Colonies social life was not as pure and pleasant there as it was in this country. He (Mr. O. V. Morgan) having, with the exception of West Africa and Patagonia, visited all the Colonies, could tell the right hon. Gentleman that social life in them was as pure as in the Mother Country, notwithstanding the fact that they had passed the law which permitted marriage with a deceased wife's sister. He had himself down for second reading that day a Bill relating to Colonial marriages, the second reading of which he did not propose to ask the House to agree to if—as he hoped and believed it would be—the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) were read a second time. In the few remarks which he should venture to address to the House, he should limit himself to endeavouring to express the feelings of their Colonial fellow-subjects. In April last year, when, for the first time in the history of the Empire, the Representatives of the Colonies met in London, and discussed among themselves and with the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford)—then Sir Henry Holland—and other Ministers of the Crown, subjects of vast importance; but he ventured to say that, next to the great question of the defence of the Empire, there was no subject to which greater interest was attached than the Marriage Laws of the United Kingdom as bearing on the Colonies. Marriage with a deceased wife's sister had become law in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania, Barbadoes, Mauritius, Ceylon, and the great Dominion of Canada; India, too, with the exception only of the European Protestants. New Zealand and Natal had also passed laws for the same effect; but they had not yet been ratified by the Crown. The Bishop of Nelson, New Zealand, had expressed himself to the effect that it would be libellous to describe these marriages as incestuous; and the Bishop of Melbourne, who was now, he was happy to say, Bishop of Manchester, was also in favour of this Bill. At the Colonial Conference, when the Marriage Laws were under discussion, Sir John Downer, Premier of South Australia, and formerly Attorney General of that Colony, was the principal Representative. The Colony which he so ably represented was the first to pass a Statute permitting marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Sir Henry Holland, the President of the Conference, asked Sir John Downer whether such marriages were recognized in all other countries? The answer was in the affirmative—

> "That there was no country outside the British Empire in which such marriages were not recognized."

Sir John Downer spoke strongly in favour of the assimilation of the Marriage Laws of the Empire. Sir Robert Wisdom, the Delegate from New South Wales, and formerly Attorney General in that Colony, in answer to Sir Henry Holland, spoke thus—

> "This grievance tends more, in my opinion, to create a feeling of irritation than any act on the part of the Imperial Government, as tending to throw a slur upon our marriages; for this, though not directly, yet by implication, does seem to throw a slur upon them, and I know causes a great feeling of irritation."

The only Colony of importance which had not attempted to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister was the Cape, and at the Conference the present Attorney General and former Premier of that Colony—Sir Thomas Upington—speaking for that Colony, used these words—

> "If the Queen sanctions an Act relating to marriage in a Colony, I think that marriage ought to be looked upon as a perfectly legal marriage in England without affecting inheritance, or anything of that sort."

The Australasian, a newspaper published in Melbourne, and enjoying a very wide circulation throughout Australasia, in a leading article, said—

> "If in Victoria a man married his deceased wife's sister, his children would be considered legitimate in England until they sued for succession to property, and then they would be pronounced bastards. That is to say, they would be pronounced bastards if they claimed to inherit real property. They would be considered legitimate if they only claimed personal estate."

And it concluded thus—

> "The passage of the measure will greatly please these Colonies."

The hon. Member for Stafford had tried to make a good deal of the opinion in Canada on this question. He (Mr. O. V. Morgan) was in Canada last year, and he found there a general feeling in favour of this Bill, and he could tell the hon. Gentleman that if the question were again discussed the Representative of the Canadian Government would be instructed to support the Bill. *The Mail*, of Toronto, a leading Canadian journal, said—

> "It is ridiculous that marriages which are legal in one part of the British Empire should be illegal in another; and it seems even more absurd that, while England sanctions certain Colonial marriages, her laws of inheritance should cast the stigma of illegality upon them. The effect is that certain persons validly married in the Colonies, under laws sanctioned by England, are looked upon in a social light, when they go to that country, almost as persons not married at all."

Notwithstanding the remarks of the hon. Member for Hampstead (Mr. E. B. Hoare), he maintained that the Marriage Laws of the United States were just as good as the Marriage Laws in this country, and that it was the abuse of those laws of which the hon. Gentleman ought to complain. He (Mr. O. V. Morgan) hoped he had proved that Colonial opinion was strongly in favour of the Bill of his right hon. Friend the Member for Great Grimsby. To him it appeared that, instead of creating difficulties between ourselves and the Colonies, it was our duty, as clearly as it was our interest, to do all in our power to assimilate the laws, and thus remove difficulties between Great Britain and the Colonies. Why should the Crown give its consent to marriages in Canada and Australia, and then, when those who had been married under laws sanctioned by the Crown came to this country, in which they were probably born, find themselves classed as outcasts? Happily for the whole Empire, the people at home, and those who lived in the Colonies, and who yet spoke of this country as "home," were becoming year by year better acquainted. Ideas were afloat which might lead, sooner than some of them expected, to a scheme of federation, which would, indeed, make this the greatest Empire the world had ever seen. In the meantime, he hoped they would do all they could to strengthen the ties of goodwill and affection which now so happily existed between the different sections of the British Empire. For these reasons he should most gladly support the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Colonel MAKINS (Essex, S.W.) said, that having an Amendment on the Paper he desired to say a few words on this question. The Marriage Law was of such enormous importance, forming, as it did, the basis of the social fabric of the nation, that it seemed to him that this question was one which should not be taken up by a private Member, however well qualified, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) undoubtedly was, to lay it before the House. It appeared to him that a responsible Government were alone entitled to take up a question of this great importance, and then only when they were in possession of that information which could not be obtained by any other means than a Royal Commission or Select Committee. It had been assumed by hon. Gentlemen who supported the Bill that there was in the country an exceedingly great desire for this change in the law. But if that were so, how was it that it had not been made a question at any Election? He had gone through five contested Elections, and in no instance had he been asked a question with reference to the Marriage Law; and therefore he took it to be purely a piece of imagination that a great demand existed for such a change in the law. The question had been debated for more than 50 years, and the opinions of those who took different sides with regard to it were no nearer together than they were formerly, and if the question continued to be debated there would be the same difference of opinion at the end of another 50 years. He was free to confess that if the question could be settled at all, it could only be settled by compromise; and he noticed that they had the Bill before them this year in a new form. In the clause which dealt with future marriages, places of worship were left out altogether, and the Registrar's office substituted. That was a long stride towards civil marriages. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) held that marriages should be civil contracts made at the Registrar's office, and that it should be left to the religious bodies, if the parties so desired, to bestow their blessing upon those unions according to the laws which governed them. They would, by passing this measure, begin the separation of Church and State by a side wind; and though under the Bill no clergyman would in future be compelled to celebrate these marriages, he would be compelled to subject himself to severe penalties if he refused to admit to the Holy Communion those who contracted these marriages, and who, in the eyes of the Church, were living in open sin. This state of things would give rise to a fresh crop of clerical martyrs, which was a condition of things which he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) did not desire to bring about. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had mentioned one or two only of the great men who had been strong opponents of this measure. He thought they might look to the great legal authorities for guidance on this point, and among the Judges and ex-Lord Chancellors he found an immense preponderance of opinion against this proposed change in the law. Lord Hatherley, Lord Coleridge, Lord Selborne, and the late Lord Cairns had spoken repeatedly against the Bill; and when he came to those laymen who took the greatest interest in the welfare of the working classes, there was none whose opinion commanded more respect than that of the late Lord Shaftesbury; and he stated that it was neither desirable nor beneficial for working men that these marriages should take place. On the other side, he had only to set Lord Westbury—the most cynical lawyer, perhaps, who ever sat on the Bench—and Lord Bramwell, on whose opinion no great stress was to be laid, because he treated theology and astrology as twin sciences. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had poured contempt upon Conferences, Canons, and everything pertaining to the Church, but placed great reliance on the opinions of Trade Unions. For his (Colonel Makins') part, he did not know what they had to do with this question. He thought they were organized and maintained for a very different purpose. He entirely agreed with what had been said against the Bill on the ground of expediency by the hon. Member for Hampstead (Mr. E. B. Hoare). With regard to the prohibited degrees, there was one argument almost given up on the other side—namely, that nothing but consanguinity ought to be advanced in prohibition of marriage; but he might remark that in the table of prohibited degrees there were only 10 of consanguinity, while there were 20 of affinity. It seemed to him a most one-sided proposal that a man should be allowed to marry a deceased wife's sister, while a woman was not to be allowed to marry a deceased husband's brother. That was binding the woman and leaving the man free; it was for the first time introducing into matrimony an inequality between the sexes. Finally, he could quite understand that women, who had no franchise or opportunity of making their views on this subject known, should write such letters as that which had been referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for Hampstead. He should vote against the Bill, and in the event of the second reading being carried, he would, if he had the opportunity, ask leave to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, the hon. and gallant Member who had just spoken was rather satirical about quoting the opinion of Trade Unions on a question of Ecclesiastical Law. But his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham referred to the opinion of Trade Unions only because the hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of the Bill laid great stress on the assumption that the working class, as a class, were not in favour of the measure. In his very able and temperate speech the hon. Member for Stafford, in moving the Amendment, had approached that grave and difficult question in a spirit which they would all do well to imitate. It was not a political or a Party question, and they ought on both sides to recognize each other's conscientious convictions and motives in regard to it. The hon. Member for Stafford assigned several reasons for opposing the Bill. In the first place, he contended that there was a general consensus of opinion among Christian Churches against the lawfulness of those marriages. Now, while he admitted that there was a strong body of opinion among Christian Churches against the lawfulness of those marriages, he asserted that there was also a strong body of opinion among those Churches in favour of their lawfulness; and, in those circumstances, he thought that the House would be entering on delicate and dangerous ground in assuming the power to decide a question as to the lawfulness of those marriages from a theological point of view. The hon. Member had specifically referred to the Church of Rome, the Wesleyan Methodists, and the Society of Friends as disapproving those marriages, and he had read the letter of Cardinal Manning, in which the Cardinal expressed an opinion adverse to the lawfulness of those marriages. But when that subject was previously debated in the House, the right hon. Member for Grimsby called attention to the fact that, although Cardinal Manning had expressed himself adversely to those marriages, Cardinal Newman, whose opinion was entitled to great weight, had stated that if he looked on that question as it affected the poorer classes he was in favour of a relaxation of the law; but that, as far as it affected the richer classes, he was in favour of the law as it existed. The Home Secretary, while maintaining on the one hand that those marriages were absolutely void as being of an incestuous character, and therefore morally wrong, in another part of his speech said that the Church of Rome did not condemn them as unscriptural, but only held them to be unlawful as prohibited by the Church, and the Church of Rome allowed them to be contracted by dispensation. Now, the late Cardinal Wiseman, a very high authority on Canon Law, was examined before the Royal Commission in reference to this subject, and when asked whether marriage with a deceased wife's sister was held by his Church to be absolutely prohibited by Scripture, he answered, "Certainly not; it is considered a matter of ecclesiastical legislation." Again, being asked whether in his Church the general prohibition of those marriages was a matter of discipline, permission to contract them being granted or not according as the Church thought would be most advantageous, the Cardinal replied in the affirmative. Being further asked whether Catholics who entered into those marriages were received with the same kindness and good feeling as those who contracted ordinary marriages, Cardinal Wiseman said—"With a dispensation, perfectly so. It is not thought disgraceful or improper the moment the Church has given permission." His Eminence also stated in his evidence that when they were contracted without a dispensation those marriages were regarded by the Church as absolutely null and void. Now, the object of the present Bill was to put Protestants in this country on the same footing as Catholics were put by the Church of Rome, and to allow them to contract those marriages if their consciences sanctioned them. Cardinal Wiseman was asked whether in ordinary cases a dispensation for that purpose would be refused, and he said—"No, I think not;" and he added that he had had a great many cases of that sort, and that a dispensation had never been refused. Then, as to the Wesleyan Body, the hon. Member for Stafford had quoted a Minute of the Conference expressing the opinion that it was the duty of members of that denomination to conform in all respects as far as marriage was concerned to the general law of the land. Well, that was a sentiment to which every sensible, law-abiding man would subscribe. As long as the Marriage Law was unaltered it ought to be obeyed. With regard to that Minute Dr. Bunting, an eminent Wesleyan, was asked a question, and he said that before the change of the law was effected by Lord Lyndhurst's Act there were from time to time cases of marriages even of some Wesleyan ministers with sisters of their deceased wives, which were not generally regarded as so disparaging to the parties as to call for an expression of disapprobation or an exercise of Church discipline, it being felt that, in the absence of legal prohibition, the matter must be left to individual discretion; but after the passing of Lord Lyndhurst's Act it must be admitted that it was the duty of all Christian people to conform in all matters concerning marriage to the actual laws of the Realm. It was now disclosed in a very recent biography that a distinguished Methodist minister expatriated himself and became a domiciled citizen of Canada in order that he might, under very special circumstances, marry his deceased wife's sister. A year passed, the lady died, the minister returned to England, and the Wesleyan Conference almost unanimously elected him to the highest position which it was able to bestow on him. Then the hon. Member had quoted the case of the Society of Friends; but, in the opinion of that body, the plain and obvious meaning of the passages quoted from Leviticus allowed marriage with a deceased wife's sister. References had been made to the Biblical argument, which was hardly suitable for the House of Commons. That Assembly was certainly not the tribunal to which he would go for an authoritative opinion upon a disputed text of Scripture. He preferred to take the opinion of an Archdeacon, Canon, and Professor of Hebrew who was a strong opponent of the Bill before the House. Archdeacon Watkins, to whom he referred, said—

> "I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the letter of the Levitical Law does not forbid, but by inference permits, marriage with a deceased wife's sister."

To those who urged that there was a strong religious conviction against these marriages, he was entitled to reply that there was a strong religious conviction the other way, entertained by distinguished Churchmen, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and other Nonconformists. It was their duty as individuals to obey their consciences, but they were not entitled to impose their conscientious convictions upon other people. Those who said that these marriages were morally wrong and incestuous ought to remember that in a very large part of the dominions of the Queen they were perfectly legal and right. There could not be two standards of morality. If marriage with a deceased wife's sister was immoral in London it must be immoral in Canada and Melbourne. Mention had been made of the fact that the Queen, upon the advice of her Ministers, had given her Assent to these marriages in the Colonies. Would that Assent have been given if these marriages were really immoral? To a Colonial law legalizing an immoral union, such as that of a man with his own sister, the Assent of the Sovereign and her Advisers would, of course, never be given. They had heard that day a very ingenious and imaginative view of the circumstance under which the law of 1835 was passed. They had heard it gravely stated that Lord Lyndhurst passed his Marriage Law in consequence of the prejudice then prevailing against the Ecclesiastical Courts. To make such a statement was to play with educated men who knew the history of the Act of 1835. The real facts were these:—The head of a certain noble family had married two sisters, and had had a son by the second marriage. The family knew that by a suit instituted in the lifetime of the parties that marriage might be rendered void, and in order to prevent such a catastrophe Lord Lyndhurst was induced to introduce his Bill, the sole purpose being to legalize that particular marriage. Lord Lyndhurst proposed that if a marriage within the prohibited degrees should not be called in question within two years after the celebration of the marriage the legitimacy of the children should be indisputable, and that in the case of marriages already performed the legitimacy of the children should be indisputable unless proceedings were taken within six months after the passing of the Bill. It was clear, therefore, that the measure was not brought in to forbid marriage with a deceased wife's sister. The Episcopal Bench, led by two very astute Prelates, the Bishop of Exeter and the Bishop of London, agreed to allow the portion of the Bill referring to past marriages to pass if a prohibitive clause were inserted with regard to future marriages, and Lord Lyndhurst agreed to the compromise, his chief object being to legalize the one marriage then in question. The House of Commons, however, struck out the prohibitive clause in Committee, upon which the Member of the Government in charge of the measure refused to be responsible for its fate. As hon. Members who were still in the House remembered well, strong pressure was brought to bear upon Members to induce them to consent to the re-insertion of the prohibitive clause, a distinct pledge being given that it would be repealed in the next year. There were at the time in the House of Commons men who had contracted these marriages, and of course they wished them to be legalized. The result of the negotiations was that the compromise offered by the Government was agreed to, and the House of Commons, as had happened before and since, accepted a Bill payable at a future date, which in the end was dishonoured. Against the legislation of 1835 there had been a chronic antagonism ever since. The law as it at present stood undoubtedly promoted immorality in our large towns. He was sorry to hear the Home Secretary say that all great nations were against these marriages, and arguing as if this was a proposal to follow in the steps of heathen tribes. The Home Secretary appeared altogether to forget that these marriages were perfectly legal in our own Colonies of Australia and Canada, and also in the United States. It was, therefore, rather astonishing to hear the right hon. Gentleman laying down the doctrine that there was a strong feeling in all religious parts of the world against such marriages. The Home Secretary facetiously remarked that there were plenty of women in the world whom men could marry as the law at present stood. But that was not the way to deal with a question such as this, which came home to the hearts of many people, and affected the morality of a large portion of the population. There was no getting over the fact that in certain classes there prevailed a strong feeling that a deceased wife's sister became the natural guardian of her children. No satire would remove this conviction. If the affection that sprang up could be prevented, the case would be different; but no Acts of Parliament could do this, and therefore, for the sake of morality, if for no other reason, such marriages should be permitted. It was no use talking about legalizing marriages with one's sister. The case of a sister-in-law was very different from that of a sister, for natural feeling revolted against marriage with the latter and not with the former. That House was not competent to decide doctrinal or theological questions, and he asked hon. Members to support a measure which would remove from the subjects of the Queen residing in the United Kingdom disabilities under which they would not suffer if they dwelt in one of the Colonies of Her Majesty. There was the further argument based on the case of the children. There was many a man who had contracted a marriage in one of the Colonies—perfectly valid according to the law of that Colony and of the Church in that Colony in which he might himself have been born—yet who, upon having to take up his residence in England, found his children stamped with the brand of illegitimacy, and his wife with the brand of immorality. He asked the House to remove this injustice, and to show that it really represented the general feeling of the people on this question.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, the House was aware that the Government did not regard this as a political or Party question; but, notwithstanding some Members of the Government individually felt strongly upon the subject of this Bill, and he being one of them, desired not to give a silent vote. He understood that the right hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) had stated that it was now generally admitted that there was no valid religious objection to such marriages as this Bill proposed to legalize.

Mr. HENEAGE said, what he had stated was that the religious argument had been practically abandoned in the discussion in 1884.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, that was much the same thing. He did not admit that the religious argument had been abandoned. But he was not going to discuss the question from that point of view, and he should be ashamed of himself if he did not state that conscientiously he had the strongest feelings that such marriages were contrary to the law of God, whether based on the Old or the New Testament. But he recognized that that House was not a proper tribunal before which to argue the subject, and he should, therefore, not pursue it further. As to the law of the Realm, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) appeared to be under a misapprehension as to the historical position of the question. It could not be contended that the Bill would place matters exactly as they were previous to 1835, and it was an entire mistake to suppose that before that Act these marriages were regarded as legal. In the course of a debate in the House of Lords in 1883, Lord Cairns, whose statements of the law were never coloured by any prejudice or personal feeling, but were always strictly accurate, pointed out this and added—"They were voidable because they were void." That was that noble and learned Lord's *dictum*, and everyone would admit that he was a great authority upon whatever legal subject he expressed an opinion. The Courts did not make the law, but only administered it; and the ground upon which they declared a marriage void, when applied to to do so, was that the marriage was unlawful and therefore void. It certainly would be very objectionable to revert to the state of things existing prior to 1835—either these marriages ought to be lawful or absolutely unlawful.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he never contended that these marriages were lawful prior to 1835, nor did he suggest that he wished to revert to the state of the law then existing. But before the Act of 1835, the validity of the marriage could only be raised during the lifetime of the parties.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, continuing, said that if these marriages were to be allowed, they would next be asked to sweep away the other regulations prohibiting marriage within certain degrees of affinity. He would not argue the question in a spirit of satire and take extreme cases, but he would urge the case of nieces and step-daughters, and he would ask, if the House broke down this principle of illegality and prohibition in cases contemplated by the Bill, how would it be possible to defend it afterwards? It was very difficult to get at information in this matter; but, as far as it was possible to do so, it was clear that there had not been a large number of breaches of the law; but was it not a serious thing to break down the principle that man and wife were one flesh? That principle had been recognized for upwards of 300 years, and if the House recognized that as the true principle, there was no difficulty in following it out to its logical conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman opposite made use of an expression which, though he sympathized warmly with it, could, he thought, be turned against himself. The right hon. Gentleman said there were a number of people who desired to put themselves in a proper position. But there was no disguising the fact that there was a large number of people in this country whose feelings would be outraged, and whose religious views would be affected by such a state of things as the Bill would bring about. He believed that for one widower who desired to marry his dead wife's sister there were 20 or even 50 widowers who preferred that their dead wife's sister should be able to live in their houses without thinking of matrimony. He was astonished to hear the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Sir John Simon) say that if the Bill did not pass, no sister-in-law would be able to live in her brother-in-law's house after the death of her sister. He could quote many instances of the wife's sister doing so without any idea of the necessity of matrimony. It did not always follow that a widower must fall in love with his sister-in-law, or wish to marry her. The relationship of brother and sister—a relationship without a spark of passion—commenced as soon as an honest and pure engagement took place, and the feeling which was likely to bring about the relationship of matrimony did not arise in the minds of those who were thus members of the same family. The passage of this Bill would put an end to that principle for once and for ever; for after that no sister could, with any degree of propriety, continue to reside in the house of her deceased sister's husband, after the death of her sister. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that the natural mother of a dead woman's children was her sister, who would guard them as her own. A woman would make that sacrifice from pure affection, and from the various motives of family life; and over and over again admirable families were to be heard of in which children had been brought up by their dead mother's sister, without the latter ever entertaining a thought of matrimony. It had been said that this was a poor man's measure. That he absolutely and entirely denied. Speaking of election speeches, he thought the opinion of nearly every Member of the House would be that they had scarcely ever been asked a question on this matter on election platforms. He wanted to know upon what information the advocates of the measure came forward and described it as a poor man's measure? He did not believe that instances of a deceased wife's sister going to live with the widower were nearly so common in the case of poor people as in the case of persons in other ranks of life. On the contrary, this agitation had been kept alive for years by the money and efforts of men who were comparatively well-to-do — very estimable, no doubt, in other matters—but who had broken the law. It was well known that there were many instances of men—otherwise of the highest character—who desired to get the law altered for their own purposes, and the *onus* rested on those who advocated the change to satisfy the House that there was a large and widespread demand for it. If this change were made it would not only affect domestic arrangements after the wife's death, but that enemy to domestic happiness—jealousy—would become much more common. From whatever point of view the matter was regarded, the House ought to be satisfied that the majority of persons who were likely to suffer from the existing state of the law desired the change. The logical position was the recognition of the principle that the man who married a woman became one flesh with her, and she with him, and if that principle was not recognized he was sure horrible results would ensue. He entertained respect for the opinions of others, but as he felt strongly on this matter he hoped the House would not assent to the proposed change of the law. In conclusion, he would say that he did not believe there was any evidence to show that there was a widespread demand for the measure among the working classes.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that, so far from this being a poor man's question, from the inquiries he had made he found that the majority of these cases arose not amongst persons of that class. In the community of which he was a member the great majority of applications came from persons who were comparatively well-to-do, and very few of the poor had anything to do with them. They had had pamphlets and leaflets distributed with regard to the opinions of ecclesiastical authorities. They had had the opinion of Cardinal Newman quoted in a fragmentary and misleading form, and they had had certain passages read out from the evidence of Cardinal Wiseman before the Royal Commission of 1846, and certain Petitions to this House signed by Catholic Bishops of England and of Ireland which were calculated to impress Members with the notion that Catholics were in favour of the present Bill had been circulated. Well, now, the answer to all these was very simple. If these Cardinals, and Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic Church were in favour of the present Bill, why were they not also in favour of the abolition of the ecclesiastical prohibition against the marriages in question? If they said that the Civil Law ought to be altered, why did they not say that the Ecclesiastical Law ought also to be altered? None of those who had solicited the opinions and testimonials of the Catholic Bishops had ever said to them—"Will you propose the abolition of the ecclesiastical prohibitions?" Those people knew that there was not a single Catholic Bishop in the world who would for a moment entertain any such proposition. And why? Because the experience of the ecclesiastics of the Catholic Church—and he referred to them not in a religious way, but merely as a portion of an historic and educated community who had the interests of mankind generally at heart—was this, that it was salutary and beneficial and necessary for the preservation of the integrity and sanctity of the home that these limitations and these prohibitions should exist. They had recognized that certain exceptional extreme cases might arise from time to time, and with that tender care that they had ever manifested in matters of this kind had arranged for dispensations when there were good and strong grounds set forth. Now, what was it that these Archbishops and Bishops and priests asked the House to do in the Petitions they presented to it? Why, not to abolish the prohibition, not to do away with the limitation, not to disregard the degrees of affinity altogether, but to recognize civilly those dispensations which the ecclesiastical authorities of the Church thought fit to grant. Now, was the House prepared to take up that position? If the House was prepared to say that where the Pope and where the Catholic Bishops had granted dispensations, they, the civil authority of the United Kingdom, would recognize the validity of the marriages, but not in other cases? If they would do that they would accede to the Petition of the Catholic Bishops, because the Catholic Bishops did not ask them to go any further than that. They were not in favour of the policy of the present law, and they would not for a moment entertain the idea that the ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be done away with. Now, if this Bill were passed, the ecclesiastical authorities of the Catholic Church would maintain these prohibitions and rules intact with perfect disregard of the Legislature. They would no more consider the Act passed by that House than they would consider an Act repealing the Ten Commandments. The prohibition of the marriage of a widower with his deceased wife's sister would be as complete in the Catholic Church as it was now. If such was their conviction—if the conviction of the Catholic members of this community was so strong in favour of prohibition that they would still be prosecuted for entering into such marriages, why should the non-Catholic portion of the community be exposed to the social and moral dangers which these prohibitions were intended to prevent? As a Catholic, he himself was perfectly prepared to accept the dispensing power of the Church as sufficient for the purpose, and yet in the interests of the non-Catholic portion of the United Kingdom he should certainly oppose the present Bill. If they could devise in this country any dispensing power analogous to that which existed in the Catholic Church, as to the possibility of which he offered no opinion, then he could conceive that they would get over the difficulty; but he was satisfied of this—that if they allowed such a measure as the present one to become law, they would be letting loose upon society in England all those evils which had been appreciated and foreseen and guarded against by those whose judgment was most valuable through all the centuries during which Christianity had existed. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had talked about the enactment of Justinian, but it should be borne in mind that centuries before that enactment the laws of the Romans, of Valentinian, Theodosius, and others, were upon this subject of the strongest and most expressive kind. Not only did the Roman Code forbid such marriages, but there were provisions dealing with the dissolution of such unlawful unions which were of singular force. No matter under what circumstances or by what mode the original marriage took place it was dissolved, and never once did the Roman law recognize the propriety of a marriage between a widower and his deceased wife's sister. But that was in the very earliest ages of Christian influence in the Roman Empire, and from these early days of Christianity up to the present time it would be found that the Christian community constantly opposed these marriages, except that in very exceptional and rare cases dispensation or authority had been given, but very grudgingly given. It was perfectly true that in certain of our Colonies the law was different to what it was in this country, and that the Colonists complained of the difference of the law. Well, if the law was to be altered in one place or the other, why should it not be altered in the Colonies? Those in the Colonies who objected to the present law in this country entered on their present marriages with the full knowledge of what the law was, and the laws of the Colonies which authorized these marriages were passed with full knowledge of the disqualifications and impediments prevailing in this country. But whatever might be the views of politicians with regard to marriages of this kind—however their constituents might influence certain individual Members of the House in voting for the present Bill—he could not understand how any Catholic Member could, under any circumstances, consent to a scheme which was profoundly and essentially opposed to every instinct and every tradition of Catholicism.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) said, he would not detain the House for more than a few moments, but he could not abstain from asking the House to consider that it was not the Roman Catholic Church alone which entertained a rooted and fundamental objection to the class of marriages that it was thought desirable to render lawful by this Bill. All branches of the Christian Church entertained the same opinion. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] At all events, the National Church of England and all the Presbyterian Churches did so. It was not at all necessary to go back to the Mosaic Law. It was the Christian Law of Marriage in its principles to which they appealed to show that these marriages were detestable in the eye of the Christian Church. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) had stated the principles upon which such marriages were repugnant to Christianity; but if it were desirable to break down the present law forbidding marriage, let it be on broad grounds, and not for the convenience of individuals. He had seen something of the manner in which this law permitting the marriage of a widower with his dead wife's sister was passed in the Colonies. He was Governor of South Australia when the Act in that country was passed legalizing these marriages. He was witness of the factitious means made use of to induce the Legislature of South Australia to pass the Bill. It was an agitation got up from home, and got up with money. It took root in a fertile field, and amongst a community somewhat impatient of ecclesiastical restrictions. In this country we did not look upon ecclesiastical restrictions as binding, unless they rested on principles which we acknowledged to be just, and he thought it would be admitted that in this country the ecclesiastical restriction against marriage with a deceased wife's sister rested on the strongest principles of propriety and justice. The Christian marriage was an alliance contracted under the sanction of Christian principles. It was a sacred symbol, and would in itself be greatly deteriorated if its relationship was made other than the absolute union of man and woman. The Bill would place a man in a hateful and detestable position towards his sister-in-law, who, but for the existence of such a measure, he would be entitled to look upon in terms of infinitely closer regard than any other woman not related to himself. The passage of such a Bill would place the English family life on a totally new footing, changing the whole of its relations. And if such a change were desirable in one instance, it would be equally desirable in another, and Parliament could not consistently consent to introduce new principles and allow marriages in one degree of affinity, when it did not permit them in another and similar degree. Yet the House would shrink, it would hardly dare to legalize marriage with a deceased husband's wife or with other relations more remote. Though the House had on previous occasions accepted similar Bills to this, he ventured to think that the mature judgment of the country had never been enlisted in its favour, whilst there was evidence of a deep-rooted aversion against the principle it contained on the part of large sections of the community.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that they had had a very friendly debate on both sides, and he trusted that now they would be allowed to proceed to a Division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 239; Noes 182: Majority 57.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Banes, Major G. E.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Barran, J.
Bass, H.
Beaumont, H. F.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Bigwood, J.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bright, Jacob
Bright, W. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cobb, H. P.
Coddington, W.
Colman, J. J.
Corbett, A. C.
Cossham, H.
Courtney, L. H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossley, E.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Darling, C. J.
Davies, W.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dixon, G.
Duff, R. W.
Ebrington, Viscount
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gane, J. L.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Giles, A.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gray, C. W.
Grey, Sir E.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gully, W. C.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hingley, B.
Hobhouse, H.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Knowles, L.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Lea, T.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Legh, T. W.
Lewis, T. P.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
MacInnes, M.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
Maitland, W. F.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mattinson, M. W.
Menzies, R. S.
Mildmay, F. B.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, A.
Morrison, W.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Neville, R.
Newnes, G.
O'Connor, T. P.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Pugh, D.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Randell, D.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, T. W.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sellar, A. C.
Sheehan, J. D.
Simon, Sir J.
Sinclair, W. P.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Spencer, J. E.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stepney-Cowell, Sir A. K.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, T.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Taylor, F.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Villiers, right hon. C. P.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Warmington, C. M.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
West, Colonel W. C.
Whitbread, S.
Wiggin, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winn, hon. R.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.

Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, C.
Wright, H. S.

TELLERS.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Kelly, J. R.

NOES.

Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Bates, Sir E.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flynn, J. C.
Forwood, A. B.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fulton, J. F.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gedge, S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Granby, Marquess of
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Lord E
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Harrington, E.
Hastings, G. W.
Hayden, L. P.
Heath, A. R.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Holloway, G.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
King, H. S.
Knightley, Sir R.
Lafone, A.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Matthews, right hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Power, P. J.
Price, Captain G. E.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Reed, H. B.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Sullivan, D.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, Colonel H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wroughton, P.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Salt, T.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday* 27th April.

WAYS AND MEANS.—COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed

"That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say) :—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts..	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts ..	1	0	0

—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he desired to ask whether the Government had considered the inequality this proposal would make in respect to certain humble but very sound wines? It was all very well in regard to such wines as champagne; they could bear the burden of 5*s.* a dozen. The charge on each bottle being slight in proportion to price did not matter much. But there were Greek and Italian wines imported in bottles, or in flasks, protected by wicker work —familiar to the eyes, if not to the taste, of hon. Members—on which the charge would weigh with very great severity. Some of these wines were introduced in barrel, and bottled in England; but a very large proportion of wines, such as Barolo and Chianti, were imported in flasks such as were used for olive oil. The proposed duty would revolutionize the trade, and compromise the interests of a large number of persons who dealt in these articles. The amount of such wine drunk in London was very much larger than many hon. Members would suppose; in fact, he had a very strong suspicion that more *bonâ fide* Italian wine was drunk in London than *bonâ fide* champagne. A great deal of stuff was not only bottled, but made in England, and passed under the name of champagne; the amount of real champagne drunk was a very measureable quantity, but the consumption of *bonâ fide* Italian wine was larger than that of real champagne. To throw on that wine the charge of 5*s.* a-dozen was altogether out of proportion to the same charge placed on champagne. The bottles were sold, he supposed, at from 1*s.* 10*d.* to 2*s.* 5*d.* a-piece, and to put 5*d.* on the price was equal to a duty of 20 or 25 per cent *ad valorem,* in some cases more; while the charge on champagne amounted to only about 8 or 9 per cent. That difference of treatment was very serious, and he would ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government had considered the inequality of the incidence of the duty, and proposed to make any modification in the arrangement?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) hoped the hon. Gentleman would not ask him to go into the merits of the question. As he was aware, the Resolution now proposed was merely to correct a little inaccuracy in the former Resolution, or an oversight. It was overlooked that there were bottles larger than two imperial quarts, and the Resolution had been amended to cover the larger and smaller bottles. He believed the question raised by the hon. Member had been under the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but the hon. Member would agree that a more convenient opportunity for discussion would be in Committee on the Budget Bill. He knew his right hon. Friend had given attention to the subject; but in his absence he would rather not answer the question of the hon. Member.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) asked, had the Government considered the possible effect of this duty on our commercial relations with foreign countries, especially France, and whether those relations appeared to be in any way insecure, and whether the reports in the newspapers had any foundation, and there was any reason to suppose measures of retaliation might be adopted? When the proper time came, he hoped those questions would not be lost sight of. He made these observations in consequence of remarks that fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he put his proposals before the House. In an unwise moment, the right hon. Gentleman gave expression to an opinion that we had not received much consideration from foreign countries, and might therefore act with a certain amount of liberty in this matter. All he (Mr. Illingworth) would observe in this connection was, that England would suffer infinitely more in her international fiscal relations by these paltry interferences with trade, and they were putting into the hands of Protectionists of other countries a powerful weapon by putting on this tax, accompanied by such observations as those of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he had alluded to.

MR. JACKSON said, he should not like these remarks to go forth without observation. He was rather sorry the hon. Member had taken that opportunity of raising the question, and upon such very slight and uncertain information. The Government had no knowledge of, nor any reason to anticipate, any of the difficulties the hon. Member seemed to apprehend so far as France or any other country was concerned. It was not likely that any difficulty would be created by the financial proposal.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he was afraid the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) had hardly been watching what was going on in France. But, passing from that subject, he wanted to ask, had the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered the effect of the duty oun or Colonial wine trade? The Australian Colonies were growing sound wines, and sending them to England in increasing quantities, mainly in bottle. The imposition of this duty on light wines in bottle must needs much affect that trade. On this Colonial trade, as well as on the Tuscan wines, the duty would be almost prohibitory. So, also, the wines of Austria, Hungary, and Greece that were imported in bottle. These were useful wines; they were cheap—[An hon. MEMBER: And nasty.]—he did not share that opinion of his hon. Friend. Some who had drunk the wines could endorse the praise that Robert Browning gave to "good Chianti and old Barolo." There was less objection to the tax on champagne, but the tax would have a mischievous result on our commerce in other respects.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W) said, he was not qualified to discuss the merits of the wines in question; what he had to say had reference to other points. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made a demand in the Resolution which he was not present to support, and the Secretary to the Treasury, usually so profuse in explanation, had given no reason why there should be this mechanical tax on wines imported in bottle. What was the danger of importation in that form, and was it an extraordinary thing to put the same tax on a bottle of wine, whether it cost half-a-crown or half-a-guinea? This was proposed, too, at the very time when the instincts of every man who professed to desire the advancement of international relations between this and other countries should dictate to him to teach foreign nations that protective duties were bad in principle. But the Government imposed a Protectionist tax that he must say was of a stupid character, for it was based on the mere mechanical calculation of quart and pint bottles. The Committee was entitled to some more urgent reasons than had been given by the Secretary to the Treasury. The hon. Gentleman said the Resolution was only supplementing some previous mistake. [Mr. JACKSON: A correction.] He accepted the correction, but must express his own opinion that the Resolution only supplemented a previous mistake, and carried it further. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might have been present to say why the charge was proposed, as to which the Secretary had not enlightened the Committee. This was more than a mere question of a duty on champagne; the cheaper light wines were concerned, and were to be taxed 25 or 30 per cent, because they were imported in bottle. It could be conceived that it would be better for the wine to be bottled in the country where it was grown, and by the people who understood its qualities, than that it should be manipulated by people in London, as it would be, to avoid the tax of 5*d*. per bottle, or 6*d*. as it would be to the consumer. On other points the proposal was objectionable; but he did not wish to occupy time. No explanation had been given to the Committee why debateable matter should be pressed on within a few minutes of the close of the Sitting. There was ample time before the House—the Government had not foreshadowed the close of the Session. To those who believed in Free Trade, these taxes had a Protectionist tendency, and this at a time when there were indications of possible foreign complications, indications that a time might be at hand when those who professed such anxiety for the integrity of the British Empire might find that Empire in danger, or at least in trouble. This was no time for proposing what at the best was but a petty, paltry tax, but which might endanger our commercial relations with our neighbours, and give the Government the colour of advocating Protectionist principles.

MR. JACKSON said, he was sorry if the hon. Member misunderstood him. He intended to point out that the Resolution was really to correct an omission in the previous Resolution in reference to wines in bottle. No reference was made in that Resolution to bottles larger than two imperial quarts. The present Resolution raised no new question—it was a mere correction of a Resolution already passed.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, in view of the importance of the subject he would move that the debate be adjourned.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the proper form of carrying out the hon. Member's intention would be to move to report Progress; and he would point out that if that Motion were seriously moved, he must, of necessity, under the Six o'clock Rule, leave the Chair.

MR. CRAIG said, he would make that Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. Craig.*)

MR. JACKSON said, he hoped that the Motion would not be pressed. If the Resolution were not passed, the previous Resolution remained in its present form. The present Resolution simply applied to certain bottles that were left out of the list, and there was no ground for such omission.

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked, was it not a fact that the Government were now levying the new duty?

MR. JACKSON: Certainly.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that aggravated the difficulty, and he objected to further progress.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.—[BILL 61.]

(*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richard, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. William Abraham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he hoped there would be no objection to taking the second reading of this Bill with the intention of referring it to a Select Committee. Among Welsh Members, Liberal and Conservative, there was no objection to that course.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the First Lord of the Treasury had objected previously to the second reading being taken without discussion.

Second Reading *deferred* till *To morrow.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under "The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886," relating to lands in the Parishes of St. Mary, Newington (Surrey), St. Pancras (Middlesex), St. Dunstan, Stepney (Middlesex), St. Mary Abbotts, Kensington (Middlesex), and Elstree (Hertford), *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 212.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the City of Coventry, the Rural Sanitary Districts of the Cockermouth and Shardlow Unions, and the City of Worcester, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 213.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Local Government District of Alfreton, the Borough of Cardiff, the Local Government Districts of Leadgate and Llanfrechfa Upper, the Port of Lowestoft, the Local Government Districts of Oswaldtwistle and South Gosforth, and the Improvement Act District of Spalding, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 214.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Orders under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the parishes of Asheldam, Black Notley, Bradwell-near-Coggeshall, Cressing, Dengie, Fairstead, Feering, Goldhanger, Great Coggeshall, Great Totham, Kelvedon, Langford, Little Coggeshall, Little Totham, Mayland, Pattiswicke, Purleigh, Rivenhall, Saint Lawrence, Saint Mary's, Saint Peter's, Southminster, Steeple, Stisted, Stow Maries, Terling, Tollesbury, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Tolleshunt Knights, Tolleshunt Major, Ulting, White Notley, and Wickham Bishop, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 215.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the townships of Foston, Heslerton West, Ideridgehay-and-Alton, Ireton Wood, Kirk Ireton, Scamston, Thornton-le-Clay, Thorp Bassett, and Yeddingham, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 216.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the parishes of Barnston, Bowers Gifford, Corringham, Downham, Dunton, Fobbing, Great Bardfield, Great Dunmow, High Easter, High Roothing, Laindon (two), Langdon Hills, Lee Chapel, Little Bardfield, Little Warley, Nevendon, Pitsea, Ramsden Bell House, and Vange, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie,

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 217.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 4) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the Parishes of Aberffraw, Ceidio, Edeyrn, Llandogged, Llandudwen, Llangadwaladr, Llanrhychwyn, Nevin, Trefriew, and Tydweiliog, and to the Townships of Llanrwst and Tre-Gwydir, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 218.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 5) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the Parishes of Avington, Berstead, Brixton, Brook, Calbourne, Easton, Gatcombe, Itchen Abbas, Itchen Stoke, Kingston, Saint Nicholas, Shalfleet, Shorwell, Thornham, and Wootton, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*; and read the first time. [Bill 219.]

GUARDIANS OF THE POOR (QUALIFICATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Qualification of Guardians of the Poor, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. Stuart, Mr. M'Laren, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 220.]

House adjourned at two minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 19*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Select Committee*—Liability of Trustees (24), *nominated.*

Third Reading—Army (Annual)* (55); East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways)* (56), and *passed.*

LIABILITY OF TRUSTEES BILL.

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Lord HERSCHELL, in moving to name the Peers as the Select Committee on the Bill, said, that he had received a large number of communications containing suggestions for alterations and amendments in the Bill proposed. The communications had been so numerous that he had found it quite impossible to acknowledge them individually, and he wished to take that opportunity of thanking those who had made suggestions to him, and to assure them that they should receive full attention and consideration.

Moved, "That the Lords following be named of the Select Committee:"—

E. Cowper.
E. Milltown.
E. Northbrook.
L. Thurlow.
L. Brodrick, (*V. Midleton*).
L. Wigan, (*E. Crawford and Balcarres*).
L. Fermanagh, (*E. Erne*).
L. Hobhouse.
L. Herschell.

Motion *agreed to.*

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL, in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission to inquire into and report upon the question whether a revision of the Standing Orders in the House of Lords, or other changes with regard to it, might be so framed as to add to its efficiency,"

said: My Lords, although the Motion stood upon the Paper on the 19th of March, it was not possible to bring forward the Notice in the form of an

Amendment. It came behind another, and, according to the usages of Parliament, two Amendments cannot both lead to a Division. Indeed, by one, the House will recollect, some hesitation and confusion was occasioned. In answer to a challenge from the noble Earl who moved for a Select Committee, I said that I should bring it forward as a separate proposal; and have, therefore, sought an early opportunity to do so. My Lords, it cannot be held that the subject is abandoned, because on the 19th of March, after an eloquent debate, the Motion was defeated. The language of the Press, which if it ought not to have too great a sway, can never be entirely disregarded, urges us to follow up the question. There is a Bill before us to reconstitute the Chamber. Let me add it was presented since I gave my Notice for this evening. If that Bill had any chance of being adopted as it stands, the present Motion might have been unnecessary. As it has not the least, the Motion is most apposite. That Bill requires a Commission to amend, and even a Commision to interpret it. I am not on that account opposing it, or wishing to disparage it. I do full justice to its author, who has laboured on the subject. But it requires, like other schemes, a drastic and effective agency to decompose and to appraise it. A few weeks ago, the noble Earl from whom it comes, declared himself in favour of inquiry. To-night it is hardly necessary to enter into general considerations when your Lordships have lately had so great a dose of erudition and of oratory that its effect may still continue. Whether Mr. Pitt, or the noble Marquess the First Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury), has been most fertile of new Peerages, is a very interesting question, but does not really bear upon the changes to be thought of. We may see, from the memoirs of Lady Esther Stanbope, that Mr. Pitt avowed to his gifted niece, who was the mistress of his household, that he had gone much too far in that direction. We do not know that the noble Marquess has yet been hurried into any similar confession. I only mention that in passing. The essential point is to show that, in rejecting a Select Committee, the House has in no way declared itself against a Motion like the present one. A Select Committee would not have been a proper agency from several considerations. On a subject of such magnitude, so interesting to all the House, and where so many would have urged a proper claim to sit upon it, it must have been composed of a number about or over 20. A Body of that kind cannot be consultative. It is made up on principle of adverse elements, which look on one another with reciprocal distrust, and cannot well be drawn to harmony and confidence. I do not speak from theory, but saw it upon two occasions—a Committee of Lord Grey upon the Franchise; a Committee under the late Lord Clanricade, a few years after, upon Irish Land Tenure. In all probability the Committee would have been under the direction of the noble Earl who moved for it. But he is more conspicuously than anyone identified with a Leader much distrusted by the greater part of this Assembly. Moreover, in his long and able speech, the noble Earl foreshadowed rather violent proposals, of which the aim would seem to be to transfer the majority from one side to the other. But there is something else more fatal to the project. The Select Committee could only work during the Session, and the remainder of the Session would not suffice for such a task as it would have to grapple with. It might be re-appointed. Its toil would even thus be intermittent. Evidence would grow and no conclusion be arrived at. Beyond that, although he spoke almost two hours, the noble Earl never once attempted to point out that a Select Committee would be a safe or an effective agency to bring about his object. His silence upon that point has condemned it. In advocating a Commission, it may be first desirable to guard it against one or two misapprehensions. It has been said that the House of Lords would lose control over the problem. The control would be quite as great by one method as by the other. A Peer might preside over the Commission, and there is no doubt that, under the direction of the Government, he would do so. A majority of Peers might also sit upon it. Again, Parliament would not be bound by its Report more than by that of a Select Committee. No Government, no Parliament, is forced to act on the recommendation of one body or the other. Like pioneers, they are subordinate to those who have instructed them. They form a path; they do not order a direction. Now for the advantage of the process. It would, in the first place, be far more limited in number. Half-a-dozen might complete it. Secondly, it need not be made up of persons usually at variance. Thirdly, it admits of talent beyond the circle of the House or of the Legislature. Lastly, it would not be subject to the Prorogation, but might go on continuously working until its labour was completed. As to the *modus operandi*, many who sit here might be available as Chairmen. It would be in communication with the Government. There would be leisure to gain Reports from all the Upper Chambers either of America or of the Continent. There would be leisure to canvass all the schemes which politicians have arrived at. There would be leisure to hear the evidence which Members of the House, who know it well, might be inclined to offer. A conclusion would be formed which must enrich, although it cannot force or compromise, the Ministry who gather it. Nine months, as they would not be broken by a Prorogation, might be sufficient for the purpose. If the Commission sat in May, by February of next year the result would be in our possession. My Lords, there is a great deal of experience to which I may appeal during the last 50 years, or since the period when legislation gained an impulse not as yet exhausted. Even before 1830 the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel appointed a Commission—famous in its time—to inquire into the Law of Real Property, from which a series of improvements has originated. The New Poor Law, in 1834, perhaps the most successful measure of our age, if you consider the abuses it corrected, the principles it recognized, the clamour it survived, the influence it exercises by Boards of Guardians and by workhouses, was nothing but an offspring of that agency. A year later, municipal reform was similarly organized and similarly carried. A Select Committee has not, as far as I know, been the basis of any celebrated measure. But there is a converse. It is worth while to glance at legislation which no inquiry has preceded. Has it entirely succeeded? If a Commission had preceded the Reform Act of 1832, it might have lasted longer. If a Commission had preceded the representative arrangements we live under, they might not have earned the title of Niagara which Mr. Carlyle gave them. If a Commission had preceded the Act on the Irish Church in 1869, we might not have seen as its upshot Protestants and Catholics dissatisfied, a fund sufficient to have tranquillized the country miserably squandered, religion unendowed, and anarchy incorporated. Experience, both positive and negative, may lead us to conclude that Commissions are the best source from which measures can proceed, unless they are the work of a Department, which is the case with many Bills your Lordships have considered. But no Department is available for organizing changes the House of Lords may be in need of. It is not a matter to refer to the Board of Works, the Treasury, or even the Home Office. The reference which I propose is based on much consideration. There is no desire to gloss it over; but, on the contrary, to bring it under the scrutinizing eyes of those who are requested to adopt it. The Commission would, at first, inquire whether revision of the Standing Orders would meet the wants of the Assembly. It is not desirable to rush into an Act of Parliament until you know it to be necessary. It is not desirable to bring one House before censorious discussion of another if you can avoid it. It is opposed to all the principles of statesmanship to seek, by hazardous exertion and precarious adventure, what you may bring about by safe, by self-depending, and internal re-arrangement. If the noble Earl who moved on the 19th of March has not arrived at that conclusion or derides it, he has not meditated long enough, and he has taken *Nimis eloquentiæ, sapientiæ parum*, for his motto. One change alone—beyond those which I lately urged upon the House, and wholly independent of them—might have considerable influence. It is the enlargement of the quorum. If a quorum of 40 or 50 was required, the daily aspect of the Upper Chamber might be seriously altered. I do not recommend the alteration, as certain hazards would belong to it, but only mention it to show that by working through the Standing Orders we might powerfully act upon attendance, the leading object to be compassed. We have lately seen in "another place" a transformation brought about by nothing but an altered system of Procedure. Blind, indeed, must be the politician who, wishing to improve the House of Lords, is unadmonished by that circumstance. But after the Commission has explored the possibility residing in the Standing Orders, they enter on the whole domain of legislative effort. The words "or other changes" take away all limit. It is not very likely that they will follow the noble Mover on the 19th of March, and recommend a Congress of both Houses—such as we may sometimes watch at Versailles, in which your Lordships would be unavoidably outnumbered—to settle controverted questions. But they would be quite at liberty to do so, if they could reason that the efficiency of this House would be promoted by the measure. In pointing to the grounds of a Commission, I am not under the necessity of indicating any scheme to which I may be favourable. It would be imprudent upon this account. The most cautious and elaborated set of changes must lead to difference of opinion. Those who do not acquiesce at first in any feature of a plan suggested would be inclined to vote against the course which I now advocate, although without a strictly logical connection, as the Commission might be wholly adverse to the feature so objected to. But I will go so far, with the permission of the House, as to refer to a most interesting paper which has come before the world since our late discussion, and alludes to it. It is a contribution to *The National Review* of April, by the Hon. George Curzon, who sits for a part of Lancashire, with the concurrence of the Hon. William Brodrick, who sits for a part of Surrey. There is scarcely any proposition in it I should not be inclined to accede to, or any train of reasoning which has not frequently occurred to me. The appearance of this paper, which is not the first from the same quarter, leads to several reflections. It shows that among elder sons, whom time may bring into this House, there is a movement to reform it. It shows that among rising politicians, there is a great maturity of observation and suggestion on the topic. It shows that a former Private Secretary of the noble Marquess opposite—for such was Mr. Curzon—impregnated with his opinions, versed in his ideas by means of that relation, is disposed to lead opinion on the subject. The Government would be deluded if they thought that an attitude of mere resistance or evasion would suffice for them. Not, however, that the slightest censure ought yet to fall upon them. On the 19th of March, they were well entitled to resist the Motion. They would be ill-advised if they determined to extemporize a measure. Should a Commission be appointed, I hope to bring before it, in a more guarded form, a scheme which coincides with that of Mr. Curzon and Mr. Brodrick in most of its particulars, and all of its foundations. It remains to touch, although but superficially and briefly, on the grounds which make some course of action indispensable. As neither Mr. Curzon nor Mr. Brodrick have sat in this Assembly, they cannot reason from experience of what demands consideration in it. The grand evil, I submit to your Lordships, and that without which no proceeding would be necessary, is the degree of non-attendance. Out of about 500, we may count on about 50. But that might be endured, although it leads to hostile criticism, and has many inconveniencies. It is only at the end of the Session it becomes enhanced into a political calamity. During the months of August and September, as I have seen for the last two years, myself remaining, the Government are wholly uncontrolled and sit with empty Benches opposite them. In the meanwhile, at the same period, and, therefore, under equal disadvantages, in "another place," you see about 300. Of course, the explanation is an obvious one. According to the hidden laws by which the world is governed, good motives are not strong enough unless necessity corroborates them. Necessity arises from electors, while men who sit for life are thrown too much upon their virtue. There is another rather grave consideration which has not been adverted to so far as I remember. In "another place" 162 Members have arrayed themselves against the hereditary principle. That circumstance alone would not, indeed, have much importance, unless it was regarded in connection with another. It ought not to be forgotten that the officers of this House are paid by an annual Vote, which may be, and is, usually debated. The same 162, enlarging gradually, may end in power to reject it. It has been said that fees would act as an equivalent. But fees depend on Private Bills and litigation, which must always be precarious. The action of this House might thus be seriously compromised by those whom, in its present form, it has to look to as opponents. It cannot be said that this House is in itself disposed to overcome the disadvantages under which it labours. A Committee on Acoustics sat some years ago. Not one of its conclusions has been acted on. It is true that they were insufficient for their purpose. But on other points—as I have lately proved—there is a similar reluctance to do anything. There is nothing violent or startling, as has often been assumed, in the principle of change applied to Upper Chambers. Some of the most distinguished have been corrected with advantage. The Roman Senate, if I am not deceived, on several occasions had new elements adjoined to it. It lasted far enough into the Empire to debate whether Christianity or Paganism should be the national religion. Since 1830, the French Senate has been often reconstructed. It is still flourishing, and musters day by day, as I know, about 100 Members. Withing the last few years, as we were told on the 19th of March, the Upper House of Hungary has been a good deal modified, with no bad effect so far as present information reaches us, under the direction of a statesman so remarkable for prudence that he is styled at Buda-Pest the Sir Robert Walpole of his country. The policy of change, however, reposes on a deeper ground, and one too difficult to bring before the House, except in passing for a moment. When 20 years ago, no doubt under imperious necessity, the Reform Act of 1832 was superseded, and the power of the middle-classes was subverted, it became more essential, on the widest grounds, that the virtually disfranchised Orders should find in this House the refuge which they wanted. It became more important that a House of Commons, based on the supremacy of numbers, should not be wholly uncorrected and unbalanced. But it may be doubted whether, in its present shape, this House can ever be the necessary equipoise. That equipoise is better drawn from Senates than from Armies. But, if Senates refuse to give, they furnish Armies with a reason for supplying it. Before sitting down, I wish to make a serious appeal to the noble Marquess the Prime Minister, that he may not suddenly impede the only course by which improvement in the House can be apparently effected. The alternatives are all of them exhausted. A Select Committee has been negatived. The Government have not the slightest disposition to introduce a legislative measure. The Bill which has been read a first time might be read a second time, on the condition of being subjected to an organized tribunal, but is not likely to proceed on any other footing. The noble Marquess can appreciate the caution by which the Commissioners are invited to probe the Standing Orders, before embarking on the open sea of legislative project. According to the terms proposed on the part of your Lordships, there will be no avowal of deficiency. You will not plead guilty to inadequate attendance, or any other error. The proudest, the most irreproachable Assembly might still desire to ascertain whether its efficiency by any change might possibly be heightened. The noble Marquess cannot overlook the special difficulty of passing any measure on this subject through the two Houses of Parliament. In one, you have Conservative reluctance, in the other, Radical antagonism, to perplex you. In one, men look with pardonable jealousy on change; in the other, they are opposed to anything which takes away the blemishes, enhances the authority, and thus prolongs the action of the Upper Chamber. It is only by the aid of a well-organized Commission, the authority it gives, the currents of opinion it diffuses, that you can hope to steer through obstacles so diverse. But let me not be thought to mean that on a subject of this kind the noble Marquess can be permitted to assume the part of a Dictator. Before Easter your Lordships gave a lesson to the Government which cannot be forgotten. If something must be done, if every scheme is immature, if no preparatory course, except that which I suggest, is either feasible or adequate, it becomes this House to lead the Government into the true path, and not by them to be irrationally turned from it. With different ranks, with varying traditions, with Parties violently hostile—at least on this side of the House—your Lordships are condensed under one principle, "Nobility obliges." To resist place and power, when they go astray, or even when their policy is hesitating and their counsels are ambiguous, is not among the least imperative of many duties it suggests to us. I trust on this occasion that it may not be required, and that the Government may see the course which I submit to be the course which prudence sanctions and necessity imposes. I therefore move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission to inquire and report upon the question whether a revision of the Standing Orders in the House of Lords, or other changes with regard to it, might be so framed as to add to its efficiency."—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, he had listened very attentively to the earnest speech of the noble Lord in explanation of the Motion which he had brought before their Lordships. His Motion was—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission to inquire into and report upon the question whether a revision of the Standing Orders in the House of Lords, or other changes with regard to it, might be so framed as to add to its efficiency."

These revisions were not uncommon. They had been adopted from time to time, and it would be for their Lordships, when they saw a definite need of revision, to inquire into any matter which required to be set right. The noble Lord had observed that Select Committees on these matters had been condemned; but that view was hardly accurate. What was objected to in the Motion of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Rosebery), some little time ago, was rather the indefiniteness of the Reference to the Select Committee, and not the use of a Select Committee as a means of inquiry into a definite matter which required inquiry. He did not think the Motion of the noble Lord would be exempt from the same criticism; but, even if it were otherwise, it would be perfectly impossible to agree with the Motion. He never heard of a Royal Commission upon the Standing Orders. It was contrary to the constitution of the House, and it was very fortunate that the noble Lord lived in peaceful times, as two centuries ago he would inevitably have been sent to the Tower for such a proposal. There was no instance, he ventured to say, of one of the Estates of the Realm initiating an inquiry into the constitution of another. If there was anything in the Standing Orders which the noble Lord, or any other noble Lord, could show required inquiry, the Government would not be averse to inquiry; but, of course, it must be by the ordinary Constitutional course of a Select Committee. But he feared it would be raising a grave Constitutional question to ask the Crown to undertake an examination of the Standing Orders, and he could not advise their Lordships to assent to the Motion.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL: I am not sure whether I fully understand the objection of the noble Marquess. If this House addresses the Crown to pursue inquiry by which changes may be recommended, what is there to prevent the Crown from undertaking it? It can be no encroachment on our Body. But this is nothing but a technicality, as the Commission, like all Commissions, would be nominated by the Government. Beyond that, the Reference to the Standing Orders, although it seems to me a good precaution for the reasons I have stated, is in no way indispensable. It may be omitted altogether, and the Commission would only have a general Instruction to report on changes which appear to be desirable. If, however, Her Majesty's Government feel themselves unable or unwilling to organize a Commission of the kind, I cannot press the Motion.

On Question? *Resolved* in the *negative*.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have directed the Select Committee appointed by them to join with a Committee of this House to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation to meet the Committee appointed by their Lordships in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, To-morrow at half-past Three of the clock:

Ordered, That the Committee appointed by this House do meet the Committee appointed by the Commons in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, *To-morrow* at half-past Three of the clock.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday 19*th April,* 1888.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Standing Orders, Mr. Carew *added.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—Keble College [*Lords*], *negatived.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Fifth Night*], *debate adjourned;* Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment [207].

Committee — Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) [32]—R.P.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL — *Ordered — First Reading*—Pier and Harbour * [221].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

KEBLE COLLEGE BILL [*Lords*].

(*By Order.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) said, that in rising to move that the Bill be now read the third time, he ought to apologize to the House for taking up its most valuable time by explaining the object of a measure of this kind at so late a stage. The course, however, which had been taken by the hon. and learned Member for the Barnsley Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Courtney Kenny) necessitated this, and it was a most unusual one. It was a Bill which had passed the other House of Parliament through all its stages, not merely as a matter of form, but after having received full consideration there. As far as he knew, no opposition had been raised to it at any stage. It then came down to that House, and had passed the early stages in the usual way. Having been read a second time, it went before the Chairman of Committees, who made a special Report upon it, and now, having passed all the other stages, it came before the House for a third reading. He must apologize for occupying the time of the House on a matter of that kind; but there was no other alternative left, seeing that hon. Members opposite sought to throw out the Bill upon the third reading. No doubt, it was within the right of hon. Members to take objection, even to the last stage of the Bill; but in consequence of that action it became necessary that he should explain to the House, in a few words, what the objects of the measure were. "The Mortmain Act," so-called, of *Geo.* II., was passed with the object (according to *Williams on Real Property*) of preventing improvident alienations or dispositions of landed estates by languishing or dying persons, to the disherison of their lawful heirs. This Statute provides—

> "That no lands or hereditaments . . . . shall be conveyed or settled for any charitable uses, unless such lands or hereditaments . . . . be conveyed by deed . . . . 12 calendar months at least before the death of the donor or granter. And all gifts, conveyances, and settlements for any charitable uses whatsoever made in any other manner or form than by that Act is directed, are declared to be absolutely and to all intents and purposes null and void. Gifts to either of the two Universities, or any of their Colleges, or to the Colleges of Eton, Winchester, or Westminster, for the support and maintenance of the scholars only upon these foundations are excepted.

Now, Keble College did not come technically within that enactment, and, therefore, the Bill had been introduced for the purpose of placing that College on the same footing in this respect as that occupied by the other Oxford Colleges. He should have thought that it did not require any great argument to recommend a Bill containing such provisions to the favourable consideration of the House. After all, what did the Bill do? It merely enabled Keble College to receive bequests of property in the same way as the other Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge. It was stated that Keble College was not like the other Colleges, either in Oxford or Cambridge; that it had special privileges, and did not come under the operation of the ordinary law. That was the contention of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Courtney Kenny), but even if there were misguided persons who chose to waste their money in making bequests of this kind, he (Mr. Talbot) could not see why their wishes should have no effect and they should be prohibited from doing so. The hon. and learned Member or his Friends were apparently under the impression that people attached to Keble College were likely to endow it with a large amount of property. There was, however, this Proviso in the Bill, that Keble College should only be empowered to hold real estate devised by will to the value of £5,000 per annum. That was not an alarming amount of property for a College to hold. There was only one other argument with which he would trouble the House. Since the passing of the Mortmain Act of *Geo.* II., to which he had already referred, similar enabling Bills to that which he had now the honour of submitting had been passed by Parliament. Exemptions had been granted by Private Acts—in the cases of the Royal Naval Asylum, by an Act of 1811; the St. George's Hospital, by an Act of 1834; and the University College of London, by an Act of 1869. All those Acts had been passed to relieve the Colleges from the restrictions imposed by the Mortmain Act, and he only asked that Keble College should have the same immunity. He knew there were some hon. Gentlemen opposite who took a denominational view of the matter; but he should have thought that, on general Liberal principles, there would have been no objection to allow Keble College, within such reasonable limits, to possess real property. It had been stated that if Keble College had been incorporated, it would have enjoyed the same immunities which other Colleges at Oxford now enjoyed. He maintained that that was not necessarily so, because the College had been founded after the passing of the Act of *Geo.* II., and it might be contended that the immunities granted under the Act of *Geo.* II. applied only to Colleges existing at the passing of the Act. He knew of no other objection to the passing of the Bill, which in itself was a most reasonable measure. It would remove any possible misunderstanding in future. He was sorry to take up the time of the House at any length on a question of this kind; but, before sitting down, he desired it to be understood that the duty of taking charge of the Bill devolved itself upon him as a Representative of the University of Oxford, and that he had been in no way influenced by the fact that a near relative of his was the Warder of Keble College. He was simply acting as the Representative of the Governing Body of the College, and he begged to move the third reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. J. G. Talbot.*)

MR. COURTNEY KENNY (York, W.R., Barnsley), in moving, as an Amendment—

> "That it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act, enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, should be extended to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,"

said, the hon. Member who moved the third reading of the Bill (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had complained of what he called the unusual course he (Mr. Kenny) and his Friends were taking. He desired, therefore, to point out, at the outset, that those who were opposed to the measure had been compelled to adopt the course they had followed, of moving the rejection of the Bill on the third reading, in consequence of the promoters of the measure having thought fit to introduce it as a Private Bill, and not as a public measure. The first intimation conveyed to the great majority of Members of the House that such a Bill had been introduced was contained in the Report of the Select Committee to whom the Keble College Bill was referred. That Report, which the hon. Gentleman opposite had alluded to, but had not read to the House, said that the Bill contained an alteration of the general law; and under those circumstances, the Committee, although they passed the Bill without amendment, decided that it ought to be submitted to the judgment of the House. Such a Report ought not to be a mere form, and so important an alteration of the general law ought not to be passed silently and unchallenged, without an explanation and without discussion. The hon. Member complained of the action of the opponents of the Bill in provoking discussion on a measure of the kind; but he (Mr. Kenny) would remind the House that they had the authority of Sir Erskine May for saying—

> "Provisions in a Private Bill which repeal or amend a Public Act require particular vigilance, lest public laws be lightly set aside for the benefit of particular persons or places."

He had listened with some interest to the speech of the hon. Gentleman, in order to learn the grounds on which the Governing Body of Keble College sought to be emancipated from the restrictions of the Statute, which had now regulated the bequests of property to educational institutions for a century and a-half. Unless they were, through Private Bill legislation, merely to play and trifle with the law of the land, for special and peculiar exemption from the general rule of law, they should have an equally special and peculiar reason. What reason was there for the exemption which this Bill proposed? They were not called upon to discuss the policy of the Mortmain Act; but it had been the law of the land since 1736, and had recently been confirmed by both Houses of Parliament, seeing that the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill had passed the House of Lords this Session, and was read a second time in the House of Commons on the 23rd of March, only four weeks ago, without a Division. As Keble College did not oppose that Bill, it might be taken that it accepted the principle of it. It, however, disliked having the principle applied to itself. The hon. Member had referred to the precedent of the University College of London. That was the only precedent the hon. Gentleman could produce, and it was a curious illustration of the anomalies which arose, when Private Bills were introduced, to evade the general rules of law, for, although the University College obtained this exemption, its Mother Institution, the University of London, had no such privilege. Nor had the University of Durham. Yet those bodies were National Universities, whereas Keble College was not a University and was not National. Moreover, the University College of London was open to all sects, whereas Keble was confined by its Charter to the Established Church. He was surprised that the hon. Gentleman should have brought forward the case of the University College, as it afforded such a striking illustration of the evil of dealing with cases of this kind by the anomalous action of special Acts of Parliament. The hon. Member was entitled to allude with just pride to his personal connection with Keble College, and he (Mr. Kenny) congratulated the hon. Gentleman on the success of that College; but, with all his respect for that College, he must point out that it could not be regarded as a National Institution. The hon. Member had quoted it as an instance of a College which closely approximated to the exemptions embodied in the Act of *Geo.* II. but said that by mere technicality it did not come within the provisions of that Act. Now, he ventured to submit that there was much more than a technical distinction. There was a political and Parliamentary distinction between Keble College and the Colleges which really formed part of the University of Oxford. What was that distinction? No Nonconformist Denominational Institution enjoyed the favour which this Bill would give to Keble College. It was said that all the Colleges incorporated with the University of Oxford were exempt. Yes; and if Keble College so incorporated itself, it would possess by ordinary legal right what it now sought to obtain by extraordinary legal privilege. The Governing Body of Keble College had a Charter authorizing them to incorporate the College with the University. They had that right, but during their 18 years of existence they had never availed themselves of it, because if they cast in their lot with the University, they would have to follow the fortunes of the University. If Keble became part of a National Institution it would come under the direct control of Parliament, and would subject itself to the liability of being reformed whenever Parliament again applied itself to the reform of the National Universities. Oxford and Cambridge and their colleges were exempt from the operation of the Mortmain Act of 1736, because Parliament naturally put no restraint on the increase of endowments which were not mere private trusts, but were directly subject to Parliamentary control and correction. It was said that the Collegiate exemption ought to be extended, because of the recent legalisation at Oxford of various new extra-Collegiate classes of foundations like Keble College. If that were proposed, it would have to be remembered that the University might at any time revoke its connection with these foundations, including Keble College. He ventured to submit that the proper course was not to ask for special privileges for Keble College, but to alter the general law relating to the University. At present no general exemption was proposed. Keble College asked only for piecemeal legislation to benefit herself, and not to benefit similar foundations. He was not quite sure, however, if such a measure were passed, and new foundations were allowed to have the benefit of it, that Keble College would be able to put forward as strong a claim as that of other new foundations. The hon. Member had spoken of Keble College throughout as if it were connected inherently and by the necessity of its existence with the University of Oxford; but if he had read the Charter, he would have seen that it in no way connected her with Oxford, either by requiring her Governing Body to be Oxford men, or by requiring her buildings to be permanently at Oxford. There was not a single syllable in the Charter which required even the keeping up of the geographical connection with Oxford, and if ever a gathering storm should threaten the University, Keble College would be able to shake off all connection with it, and go away. And she had purposely kept her chapel unconsecrated, because consecration might introduce difficulties in regard to the exercise of some such powers given to the Governing Body by the Charter. At any moment Keble College would be able to sell her present site. Not only had her endowments no indissoluble connection with Oxford, but they were not even connected indissolubly with education itself. In their sedulous care to put Keble College beyond the reach of the reforming hand of Parliament, the framers of the Charter had authorized the Governing Body and the Visitor of the College to surrender the Charter, and dispose of the College property "as they shall judge expedient." He thought he had given adequate grounds for asking the House, even at this stage of the measure, to reject it, and not suspend the general law for the purpose of giving undue facilities to Keble College for the acquisition of property which, immediately after acquiring, she would be able to dispose of. He opposed the Bill, because it aimed at conferring exceptional legal privileges for the acquisition of property upon a Corporation which would have power to apply it to purposes at present unknown, and because to confer this privilege upon Keble College would be to place a premium upon the creation of Institutions which aimed at enjoying the advantage of University life, whilst repudiating the comprehensive national character and the complete national responsibility which Parliament had seen fit to stamp upon all the Universities of this country. He had great pleasure in moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge should be extended to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church."—(*Mr. Courtney Kenny,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. C. S. PARKER (Perth) said, he was not aware that the Bill was coming on that day, and had, therefore, not come down prepared to speak upon it. But he was much surprised that his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Kenny) should have moved the Amendment, because his (Mr. Parker's) impression was—and he should be glad to be corrected if he was wrong—that no College in Oxford was incorporated with the University, but that the University itself was a Corporation, and each College formed a separate Corporation. If so, they would find themselves in a false position in resolving to exclude a College from certain advantages because it was not incorporated. The Bill itself, it was true, recited in the Preamble that Keble College had not been incorporated with the University, and assumed that other Colleges had been. He trusted that some hon. Member would tell the House whether that was so or not. As to the substance of the Amendment, he was surprised that his hon. and learned Friend, in moving it, should have expressed pleasure in doing so. He (Mr. Parker) should have rather thought it was a painful duty, because it should be borne in mind that Keble College was founded and endowed by members of a particular Church, in order that they might enjoy education at Oxford in connection with the University. Not a farthing of its resources came from any source other than the subscriptions of that Church. When Keble College was founded, there was a movement against it both in the University and outside the University. There was a contention then that it was the policy of Parliament that the Colleges in the University should be thrown open on equal terms to all denominations, and that no new College should be founded at Oxford on different terms. But when the question was discussed publicly there was a strong preponderance of feeling in favour of allowing the members of the Church of England, or of any other Church, to provide such a College at their own cost. What was proposed by the present Bill was to give Keble College the benefit of an exemption which other Colleges enjoyed from the provisions of the Mortmain Act. Already under their charter Keble College could purchase and hold landed property to the extent of £5,000, the Bill would simply further enable a testator to leave such property to them within the same limit of £5,000. No one could doubt that the Committee upstairs had acted rightly, and in accordance with precedent, in referring the question to the House itself, because it was most undesirable that any Committee upstairs should alter the general law without obtaining an expression of the opinion of the House upon it; but he hoped the House, now the question had been referred to it, would see no objection to allowing this College, which, for all practical purposes, was admitted to rank with the other Colleges in the University, to be on an equal footing with them as regarded the Law of Mortmain. He trusted that the House would not be so narrow-minded as to stop the progress of this Bill, but would consider it desirable that all the Colleges of Oxford should be equally free to receive endowments in land. He did not see why Keble College alone should be disabled merely because it had been founded by and for the members of one Church.

Mr. COZENS-HARDY (Norfolk, N.) said, he had before him the Charter of Keble College, and it contained express power enabling the College to obtain incorporation with the University of Oxford. He also held in his hand an extract from the Charter of Jesus College, which provided that it should be incorporated with the University; and the same course was pursued in the charter of Pembroke College. He believed that it would be found that the same provision applied to the rest of the Colleges. Hitherto Keble College had not availed itself of the provision of its Charter enabling it to obtain incorporation with the University. If the promoters of the Bill would apply all the general legislation relating to Oxford University to Keble College, then let the College have the benefit of the Act of *Geo.* II.; but as long as Keble College said there were two Statutes affecting it, the advantages of one of which it was entited to claim and the disadvantages of the other it was entitled to reject, then he objected. He hoped the House would not confer that special privilege on Keble College. There were at present a number of educational institutions throughout the length and breadth of the land, and why should not they be entitled to those privileges as well as Keble College? If it was a matter for general legislation, then let it be so considered. Let the restrictions now imposed by the Act of *Geo.* II. be removed from all Colleges; but do not let the House, by a Private Bill, confer upon this strictly and purely denominational College a privilege which was now denied to all the other educational institutions throughout the country.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY (Oxford University) hoped the House would agree to the third reading of the Bill, and would reject the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for the Barnsley Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Courtney Kenny). The first objection raised to the measure was that it was a Private Bill. So far as that objection went, he (Sir John R. Mowbray) might point out that one College—namely, University College, London, had come forward and obtained an Act of Parliament for the holding of land in mortmain. The hon. Member said that no such privilege had been given to the University of London. As a matter of fact, the University of London had never asked for such a privilege. The University of London was an examining body, and had no necessity for such privilege; but if circumstances should arise to necessitate the University of London asking for the same privilege, he felt sure the House would grant it at once. He thought the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of

Committees had acted rightly in calling the attention of the House to the provisions of the measure. The hon. Gentleman, while pointing out that this was a Private Bill, accompanied his remarks with a statement that University College, London, had obtained a similar privilege by means of a Private Bill in 1869. The hon. Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Cozens-Hardy), who spoke last, said this was a privilege which had been denied to other educational institutions. That was not so, and he challenged the hon. Member to name an institution which had asked for it, and had not received it. Other institutions had obtained similar privileges. Another objection to the Bill was the remarkable and technical one that this was not a College incorporated with the University of Oxford. The hon. Member for Perthshire (Mr. C. S. Parker) asked in what condition a College would be placed which was incorporated with the University of Oxford? He could only point out that incorporation was an old and obscure process, and he was not able to enlighten the hon. Member as to the effect it would have. He did not know whether any Professor would be able to enlighten the hon. Member; because, as he (Sir John Mowbray) was informed, no College had been incorporated with the University since 1612. The Charter of Keble College was granted on the 6th of June, 1870, John Keble having died in 1865. A large sum of money was collected, and an arrangement was made to build a College to his memory for which a Charter was granted in 1870. In 1871, this fact being well known, the University passed a series of Academical Statutes on new foundations, especially adapted to meet the case of Keble College. What did these Statutes say?—

> "Any society or house founded since January the 1st 1870 for the purposes of education shall have the privileges which, under the Statutes of the University, are or shall be possessed by the Colleges within the University, on the condition and with limitation following—namely, on the condition—A. To be member of Convocation, or B.A., or B.M., or to have graduated in some other University in the United Kingdom. B. That if new buildings be provided suitable for the reception of students situate within the precincts of the University, the fulfilment of this condition to be ascertained and certified by the Vice Chancellor and Proctors. C. That its members be incorporated by Royal Charter. D. Society or house to be admitted to privileges by vote of Convocation after 14 days' notice. Provided that these conditions be satisfied, the persons admitted as students or graduates by the University, or for incorporation into any such Society or House shall have in relation to the University the same privileges and obligations as if they had been so admitted one of the previously existing Colleges or Houses, and all Statutes of the Universities in which mention is made, generally and without distinction of Colleges and Houses, shall be deemed to include and apply to such newly-founded Society or House. The head shall, in regard to members of the Society or House, be subject to all such obligations and enjoy all such rights and powers as are assigned in the Statutes of the University to the heads of the University Colleges or Houses, but this Statute shall not be construed as conferring upon him any other right, privilege, or distinction whatever."

He did not know the extent of that limitation, but he believed it was that the head of the College was not entitled to become Vice Chancellor, nor could the College itself supply Proctors to the University under a cycle regulated by a Statute made 200 years ago. He thought the passage he had read effectually disposed of the argument that Keble College had not been received into the University by the Statute passed in 1871. He had been surprised to hear the hon. Member for the Barnsley Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire say that it afforded him pleasure to move the rejection of the Bill. The hon. Gentleman was himself obliged to admit the success of Keble College, and all he said against it was that it was not tied to the University of Oxford. Now, it was tied to Oxford University by one of the surest bonds—namely, that it had expended at least £100,000—probably £150,000—in land and in bricks and mortar. It was, in point of fact, a splendid College built by the liberality of Churchmen within the precincts of the University of Oxford. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that if the House passed this Bill there would be a multiplication of these Colleges. For his own part, he should be very glad to see a multiplication of them. He rejoiced at the success which had attended Keble College; and he would remind the House that since the foundation of Keble College, another College had been projected in connection with the University for the Nonconformist Body—namely, Mansfield College. The only privilege asked for by the Bill was that donors might bequeath property to Keble College in the same way that property was allowed to be left to other Colleges. No case had been made out for raising an objection to the progress of a College which had been doing exceedingly good work during the last 18 years. Surely it should be open to all classes of the community to found new Colleges, either upon denominational or non-denominational principles; and, if so, it should certainly be open to the Church of England to found Colleges for its own denomination. On these grounds he supported the third reading of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he thought the House would expect him to say a word in regard to the question before they proceeded to a Division, though the main object of his observations would be to point out to the House that there were two distinct questions involved in the discussion. The first question was simply this—whether a College established at Oxford, such as Keble College, and in principle any other College which might be established there under the same conditions, should, in a limited degree, be emancipated from the restriction imposed generally in respect of the receipt of land devised to public bodies in mortmain—whether there should be a departure in the case of a new College, such as Keble College, or any similar Colleges, from the policy of the law as it now existed under the Statute of *Geo.* II.? That was a question which might be fairly argued, and a strong case, he thought, might be made out why Keble College, or any Roman Catholic or Wesleyan College which might be set up, should be relieved, under certain and proper limits, from the restriction of the Mortmain Act. But then came the second question—ought that emancipation to be effected by a Private Bill; or whether, being a variation of a public law, it ought to be brought before the House in a Public Bill instead of a Private Bill? He had more than once laid before the House a strong opinion that it was in the highest degree undesirable that any such departure from public law should be made in a Private Bill. In the first place, hon. Members did not know what had been done until after it had been done, and then they found, to their surprise, that an alteration had been made in the general public law by a Private Bill. Such a course opened a wide door to abuse; and if it were adopted we might find many gaps made in the public law by Private Bills which were passed without attracting notice at the time, but which might afterwards excite resentment. He was sorry that he had not hitherto been always able to persuade the House to adopt his view. He was afraid that the matter had been regarded as a pedantic and technical one. He denied that it was either pedantic or technical; on the contrary, it was sound and reasonable, and, in his opinion, the present Bill ought not to be proceeded with on the present lines. Whether a variation from the law of *Geo.* II. ought to be permitted was another matter. He would point out that even now it would not be too late to proceed this Session by Public Bill. There was at that moment before the House a Public Bill brought in by his hon. Friend the Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) to exempt from the same Statute Victoria University. That was an example of what he considered the right way of proceeding; and if it were followed in the case of Keble College, and the Bill were framed in more general terms, it might be dealt with this Session, and the impolicy of proceeding with a special Private Bill in respect to a public matter might be avoided. There was still another course which might be pursued, though he should not recommend it. There was a Public Bill now before the House for consolidating the law relating to mortmain and land held for charitable uses. If, as he understood, that was to be made not only a consolidating, but also an amending Bill, the introduction of half-a-dozen lines saying what was desired by the promoters of the present Bill and of the Victoria University Bill might be accomplished by the alteration of that one Bill; and then that Bill would contain the public law, with the exemptions from it which might be sanctioned by Parliament. He would suggest to the hon. and learned Member for the Barnsley Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Courtney Kenny) that if he would amend his Amendment by making it declare that it was inexpedient to do what was now proposed by a Private Bill, he should feel constrained to follow him into the Lobby.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said, the objection of the hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Courtney) seemed to be chiefly a theoretical one. The hon. Gentleman, in quoting the Amendment which had been moved by the hon. and learned Member for the Barnsley Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire, appeared to have left out the real gist of the Amendment, which was contained in these words—"And which is restricted to the members of a particular Church." Now, it seemed to him that this argument, which was mainly relied on by those who had opposed the Bill, implied that exemption from the mortmain restriction depended upon the undenominational character of the Institution. That, however, was not at all the case. The exemption was given to all Colleges of Oxford at the time that they were denominational institutions, and it had never been proposed during the time they were denominational Institutions to take off the exemption on that account. Nor was he aware that in the debates on the abolition of trusts it had been urged in favour of the change that the Colleges of Oxford enjoyed this exemption. He did not propose to pursue the question of law, because he did not profess to know much about the law; but he believed that the passing of this Bill, and the passing of it quickly, was a matter of importance to Keble College. Keble College was an Institution for which everyone who desired that education should be combined with a high moral and religious tone must feel great admiration. It had sent forth, during its short existence, a large army of earnest workers in this and other countries, and, for practical reasons, the House would do a great injustice if it deprived it of a privilege which belonged to every other College in Oxford which was side by side with this. He had much pleasure in supporting the third reading of the Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 125; Noes 127: Majority 2.—(Div. List, No. 76.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment in line 3, after the word "extended," to insert the words "by a Private Bill."—(*Mr. Courtney Kenny.*)

Question, "That those words be inserted in the proposed Amendment," put, and *agreed to.*

Question,

"That the words 'it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act, enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, should be extended by a Private Bill to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,' be added after the word 'That' in the Main Question,"

put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act, enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, should be extended by a Private Bill to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church.

VAUXHALL PARK BILL.

INSTRUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.), in moving—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Vauxhall Park Bill, That they do provide that the purchase of the Park be not made until the opinion of the ratepayers of Lambeth has been taken on the desirability of such purchase,"

said, that the Instruction was similar to that which was moved for by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) some time ago in reference to Brixton Park, and acceded to by the House. Before the ratepayers were made responsible for the expenditure of a large sum of money, they ought to be called upon to say whether they were in favour of the scheme or not. He could not understand upon what grounds the Motion should be opposed. It was a singular fact that the adoption of his Motion would involve no additional expenditure of money whatever, inasmuch as the Bill must go before the same Committee as the Brixton Bill, and it contained identically the same powers as those which were provided in the Brixton Bill. He desired to point out some rather curious facts in reference to this Park. In the first place, the owner of the Park and the vendor of the land to the ratepayers was a vestryman, and those who had taken the most active part in the matter were the ground landlords of the houses facing the proposed Park. He believed that his hon. Friend the Member for the Kennington Division of Lambeth (Mr. Gent-Davis) intended to oppose the Motion, but his hon. Friend could have no wish beyond that of providing the public with open spaces. He wished to point out, however, that when this ground was originally proposed to be formed into a public Park the value of it was very much exaggerated. The original price was between £60,000 and £70,000. Even the vendor's reduced valuation of £42,000 was understood to be many thousand pounds more than he paid for it recently. In the next place, the area was spoken of as 10 acres, whereas it was little more than eight. One gentleman had reported the value as being £50,000; but the gentleman in question was not a valuer, and it was somewhat unfortunate that he should have made so great a mistake, seeing that an eminent firm of valuers in London had declared the value of this property at £14,000 at the outside. Those who were opposing the scheme declared that the value was certainly not more than £30,000, or £12,000 less than the Vestry proposed to spend upon it. He had no wish to deprive the Vestry of Lambeth of the power of acquiring this land for a public Park, although he believed that the price proposed to be paid for it was most extravagant. He should certainly not oppose the opening out of this Park to the public; but if the House accepted the Instruction he was moving, there would be no sort of danger that by doing so the public would run any risk of losing the Park. Whether the Instruction was given to the Committee or not, there would be no doubt whatever that the Park would be formed. He hoped that it would not be suggested that the ratepayers had really no interest in the matter. He had been informed that no money was to be required from the ratepayers; but, on turning to Clause 3 of the Bill, he found it provided there that—

> "It shall be lawful for the Metropolitan Board of Works or the Vestry of Lambeth, or either of them, by agreement with the owners of the land, to purchase the said land or any part thereof."

Then, again, in Clause 8, it was provided that—

> "In the event of any agreement being entered into for the purchase of the said land or any part thereof by the Metropolitan Board by the authority of this Act it shall be lawful for the Vestry of Lambeth to make a contribution of such an amount as they may think fit."

It was ridiculous, under these circumstances, to say that the ratepayers had no interest in the matter. The real point, however, to consider was, whether vestrymen, at a time when a matter of this kind had never been dreamt of, were to plunge the ratepayers into such a heavy expenditure, and whether the ratepayers were to be saddled with a large expense for the purpose of purchasing open spaces in a parish? He maintained that the ratepayers of Lambeth ought to have a voice in the matter, and the only way they could obtain that voice now was by sending this Instruction up to the Committee. It might be urged that it was too late to take action; but it could easily be explained why this Instruction had not been moved earlier. He had not been aware, until the hon. Member for West Nottingham moved the Instruction in regard to the Brixton Park Bill, what course it was desirable to take in order that the ratepayers might protect themselves. The hon. Member for Kennington (Mr. Gent-Davis) had backed the Bill, and the ratepayers, therefore, knew that he was not likely to help them. In asking the House to agree to this Instruction being sent to the Committee, he (Mr. Kelly) wished to impress upon hon. Members the fact that there had been a great deal of difference of opinion upon the matter. It was suggested in a Paper which had been generally circulated to the House that there had been no division, but that the Lambeth Vestry was unanimous in its support of the scheme. He ventured to think that his hon. Friend would not care to make that statement now. On the 13th of October, 1887, the Vestry signed a Report in favour of forming the Park, but subsequently declared, by 46 to 43, to petition the Metropolitan Board of Works not to purchase the ground at all. On the 17th of September the Vestry decided not to increase the amount of its contribution to the cost; an amendment, empowering the Vestry to increase its contribution from £1,500 to £1,600 per acre, having been lost by a majority of 8 to 6. The Vestry had since declined to take up the Bill now before Parliament. He, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would not say that even the Vestry were at all unanimous in the matter. Indeed, some persons who were greatly interested in the matter very strongly opposed it. He held in his hand a copy of a letter signed by the Under Secretary of the Norwood Ratepayers' Association, dated the 26th of March, stating that a resolution had been passed by the Association, declaring that in view of the exorbitant price proposed to be paid for Vauxhall and Brixton Parks, and the unsatisfactory provisions of the Bills now before Parliament, the Association respectfully urged the Lambeth Vestry and the Metropolitan Board of Works to rescind the resolution adopted by them in favour of the acquisition of the property. It, therefore, could not be denied that a great body of the public were opposed to the scheme, and he might call attention to the fact that there was only one part of Lambeth which was in favour of the Bill. In September the Vestry refused to support the Metropolitan Board of Works in purchasing the property; but the Metropolitan Board themselves, by a majority of 4, were in favour of purchasing it. If, however, it had not been for those who represented outside wards, a majority of the Vestry, amounting to one-third, would have rejected the scheme. For these reasons he trusted the House would be of opinion that the Instruction he now begged to move should be sent to the Committee.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Vauxhall Park Bill, That they do provide that the purchase of the Park be not made until the opinion of the ratepayers of Lambeth has been taken on the desirability of such purchase."—(*Mr. Kelly.*)

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he hoped the House would not agree to the Instruction. The point was a very small one; in fact, the hon. Member (Mr. Kelly) had ruled himself out of court, because he had said that, no doubt, the property would be obtained with or without this Instruction ultimately. Under those circumstances, there was no reason why the people of the district should be put to additional expense, and there was no necessity of referring the matter to the parish. He thought it was a question in which the Vestry might be allowed a discretion. Under the general law of the land, the Vestry had full power to incur expenditure for this purpose if they thought fit. This property might have been acquired under the general Act, if it had not been found necessary to introduce other clauses into the present Bill. He thought the Vestry might be fairly entrusted with the decision of the question. The proposal of the hon. Member was that the course pursued in reference to Brixton Park should be adopted in this case. So far as he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was concerned, if he had been aware that the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) intended to move an Instruction, he should have been prepared to oppose it. There had been several other cases for the purchase of land in the Metropolis which had been effected without appealing to the ratepayers. He thought the House, if it assented to the Instruction moved by the hon. Member, would be adopting a very bad practice and a very bad principle.

Question put, and *negatived.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (ARREST OF MR. DILLON).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter relating to the Arrest of a Member of this House:—

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887.
The Queen *v.* Dillon.
Co. Louth.
Drogheda,
18th April, 1888.

Sir,

I have to report that, on the 17th inst., Mr. John Dillon, M.P. for East Mayo, was brought before me at Drogheda, in the county of Louth, charged under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, that he did at Tullyallen, in the county of Louth, on the 8th day of April, 1888, incite certain persons to take part in a criminal conspiracy to compel and induce certain tenants in divers parts of Ireland not to fulfil their legal obligations, that is, to refuse to pay their rents. Mr. Dillon was admitted to bail, himself in the sum of £200 and two sureties in £100 each, to appear and answer said charge before a Court constituted under above Act at Mell, in the county of Louth, on on the 9th of May, 1888.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN M. KILKELLY,
Resident Magistrate for County of Louth.

The Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—RATHLIN ISLAND, CO. ANTRIM.

SIR CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Government is aware of the serious difficulties connected with social and business life endured by the 350 subjects of Her Majesty in Rathlin Island, situate in the County Antrim, about seven miles from the Giants' Causeway; whether the communication with the mainland is a matter of great danger and difficulty, especially in the winter, owing to the strong currents and tides running between the Island and mainland, while the absence of any harbour not only aggravates that evil, but causes delay in the delivery of the mails, the mail boats being frequently obliged to return without delivery of the mails; whether he is aware that there is no resident medical man, and no little difficulty sometimes in providing one, owing to the danger and difficulty of communicating with the shore, while the fishing industry is seriously depressed by reason of these unfavourable conditions; and, whether the Government will secure the outlay of a moderate sum which would provide for the wants of the Island, in the construction of a sufficient fishery harbour?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I have no knowledge with regard to the subjects mentioned by the hon. Baronet; and they would not come under the notice of the Treasury unless brought forward by the Irish Government or the Postmaster General in connection with proposals for expenditure.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1887 —MODEL REGULATIONS.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Board has as yet drawn up any Model Regulations for the management of allotments under "The Labourers' Allotments Act, 1887;" and, if so, whether the Regulations will be issued as a Parliamentary Paper; and, in what number of cases, if any, Local Authorities have hired land for the purposes of "The Labourers' Allotments Act, 1887," by voluntary arrangement with owners, on lease or agreement?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have drawn up a Code of Model Regulations for the management of allotments under the Allotments Act, 1887, and it will shortly be issued and a copy sent to each Sanitary Authority. The Board have no definite information as to the number of cases in which the Sanitary Authorities have hired land for the purposes of the Act by voluntary arrangement.

SALMON FISHERIES BILL.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government will consider the expediency of introducing in the Salmon Fisheries Bill (understood to be now in preparation) a provision giving right to the public to fish for trout in rivers and lochs during the netting season?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): As I said in answer to a former Question, the Bill is for the purpose of regulating and protecting fisheries, and not for interfering with property.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—WATERFORD CITY—ASSIZES COMMISSION—OMISSION OF THE MAYOR.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.) (for Mr. R. POWER) (Waterford) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that the great Charter of the City of Waterford, granted by King Charles I., provides that the name of the Mayor shall always be included in the Assizes Commission of the City of Waterford; and, if so, can he explain why the name of the Mayor of Waterford was not included in the Commission for the present Spring Assizes, in accordance with the terms of the Charter, and with a custom which has existed for so many years?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The names of Mayors of municipal towns are not now included in Commissions of Assize. The custom of including Mayors in such Commissions had long since become practically unmeaning, and it has been accordingly abandoned. The question as to the legality of the course taken depends not upon the provision of the Charter of the City of Waterford, but on the enactments contained in the Irish Judicature Act passed in the year 1877.

Mr. P. J. POWER: What were the reasons which led to the change?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The reasons were set forth in my answer, and will also be found to exist in England.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—FREE STATE OF CONGO — CRUELTIES ON THE NATIVES.

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement published in *The Scotsman* of 3rd April, to the effect that in the country between Matadi and Stanley Pool officers of the Free State of the Congo have burned the villages of the Natives, shot the men, and maltreated and massacred their wives and daughters, so that a strip of more than 200 miles by 90 is now destitute of inhabitants; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will make inquiry as to the truth of this statement?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The Administration of the Congo Free State at Brussels has, in reply to inquiry made by Her Majesty's Minister, formally and indignantly denied the truth of the statement; asserting that in the few instances in which it has been found necessary to punish Natives at the instance of traders in the region referred to, for hostile acts to caravans or theft, the greatest moderation has been shown, and bloodshed has generally been avoided. It is said that the district is so far from being depopulated that there are at present between Matadi and Stanley Pool 15 markets, frequented on an average by between 400 and 500 traders.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS — REVENUES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is possible for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to complete and present such parts of the Return ordered on the 20th June, 1887 (of the property and revenues of the Church of England and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners), as relate to the Metropolitan area, separately and at an earlier date than the rest of the Return; and, if so, at what date such separate Return for the Metropolitan area will probably be completed and presented?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: I am informed that the separate presentation of that portion of the Return which relates to the Metropolitan area would tend to delay to a very considerable extent the completion of the Return as a whole. I have no reason to suppose that having ordered a Return as to the whole of England and Wales this House has any wish that that Return should be delayed for the purpose of expediting the publication of so much of it as will relate to the particular area in which the hon. Member is interested.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked, could the hon. Gentleman give any idea when the whole Return would be ready?

Mr. STUART - WORTLEY: No, Sir; I am afraid not. The work is an extremely laborious and voluminous one, and great correspondence is involved in it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—SPRING ASSIZES IN CAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that at last Spring Assizes in Cavan nothing over three appeals were entered from decisions of the County Court Judge; and, whether in one of these cases the appeal was not defended; and, in the other two the former judgments were varied but not reversed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Question put by the hon. Member does not represent the real facts. The Clerk of the Crown and Peace reports that the number of such appeals listed was 33; and of these 20 were heard with the following results:—Reversed, 10; varied, 6; affirmed, 4.

BURMAH—DISARMAMENT OF THE NATIVES—THE FOREST REVENUE.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether great difficulty has arisen in connection with carrying out the teak contracts in Burmah in consequence of the disarmament of the friendly Natives who are now unable to protect themselves against dacoits; whether the effect of this disarmament has been to already diminish the Forest Revenue of Burmah; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any Correspondence which has taken place on this subject?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): No such information has reached the Secretary of State as that upon which the first two Questions seemed to be founded. It follows that there is no Correspondence on the subject which could be laid upon the Table of the House.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES AT ENNIS—MR. SHANNON.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in a case tried at Ennis on the 13th April before Captain Keogh, R.M., and Mr. Irwin, R.M., arising out of the proceedings at Ennis on the 8th of April, Mr. Shannon, barrister-at-law, was instructing District Inspector Hill, who was conducting the prosecution for the Government; whether Mr. Shannon is the private secretary of Colonel Turner, who was in command of the police and military on the 8th of April; whether during the proceedings a large body of soldiers was marched into Court with their rifles on shoulder, and placed in one of the galleries; and, what was the object of this military demonstration in a Court of Justice?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): District Inspector Shannon was not instructing District Inspector Hill, though he was undoubtedly giving him assistance. District Inspector Shannon is not Colonel Turner's private secretary. There was no military demonstration in Court; but some soldiers were placed in one of the galleries in order to prevent a repetition of such disgraceful scenes of disorder as had on previous occasions occurred in the courthouse.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): What is Mr. Shannon's exact position?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not be sure; but I believe his title is Special Crimes Officer.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Then he is under Colonel Turner?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Naturally.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—CLYDEBANK SCHOOL.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that the estimated cost of Clydebank School, under Old Kilpatrick School Board, together with contingencies, amounted to £13,091; whether the Education Department was asked to pass the plans and estimates, and grant a loan of £13,000, which request was complied with; whether the expenditure on the school up to date now amounts to £20,000; and, whether he is prepared to introduce a Bill abolishing the cumulative vote at school board elections, and providing that a certain number of members retire annually, in order that ratepayers may be able to pronounce an opinion on any policy which a school board may be pursuing?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The sanction to the original loan asked for the Clydebank School was given in the circumstances stated by the hon. Member. The School Board of Old Kilpatrick have now applied for a supplementary loan, which would raise the cost of the school to nearly £20,000. Their Lordships are now in communication with the Board on the subject of this expenditure, which ought not to have been incurred without previous sanction; and, pending the inquiry, sanction has not yet been given to the loan. The Government is not prepared to introduce a Bill of the character suggested by the hon. Member.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX—ABOLITION OF POUNDAGE.

Mr. HULSE (Salisbury) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can see his way clear to carry out the proposed reform during the coming year, by the abolition of the poundage paid as remuneration to the collectors of Income Tax, and the substitution of fixed salaries in lieu thereof?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Gentleman will, no doubt, remember that I expressed my anxiety to deal with this question last Session if time permitted. I was prevented from doing so; but if time permits I hope to be able to make a proposal to the House on the subject during the present Session.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — HORSEDEALER'S LICENCE — SHETLAND.

Mr. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether farmers, fishermen, and others in Shetland, who, in addition to their ordinary occupations, traffic in ponies, will be liable to pay the Horsedealer's Licence of £15?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No licence will be required for persons dealing solely in ponies under the height of 13 hands.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BALLINASLOE UNION—SURCHARGES.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the following Guardians of the Ballinasloe Union have been surcharged by the auditor, Colonel O'Hara, in the following sums—namely, James Kilmartin, £1 19*s*. 6*d*.; J. Barrett, 10*s*. 6*d*.; Laurence Conroy, 10*s*. 6*d*.; Junius Horne, 9*s*.; E. W. Fowler, 4*s*. 6*d*.; R. O. Connor, 9*s*.; for sanctioning relief to a man suffering from diabetes, and two men whose united ages amounted to 164 years; has the auditor full discretionary powers in these matters; and, have the Law Courts power to remit these surcharges against the will of the auditor, even in cases where a doctor's certificate has been presented by the relieving officer?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): James Kilmartin was surcharged by the auditor, Colonel O'Hara, the sum of £1 9*s*., and the other Guardians the several sums set forth in the Question, on account of illegal outdoor relief afforded to two persons. One of these was stated to be suffering from diabetes. I am not aware of their ages. The auditor has full power to disallow and strike out illegal payments. The Law Courts have no power to remit these surcharges.

Mr. HARRIS: What is the legal amount of relief which Guardians are entitled to give; and are not the facts in this case as follows:—One man received 5*s*. per week for 10 weeks and 3*s*. per week for 16 weeks, and another man 1*s*. 6*d*. per week for 26 weeks? Does the right hon. Gentleman assert that those sums were over the amount which the law allows the Guardians to grant?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand the matter, the Guardians acted entirely illegally, and gave outdoor relief to two men who were not qualified to receive it. One of those men had 13 or 14 acres of land, and the other eight acres, and they were, therefore, disqualified.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): Is it not a fact that in England, when surcharges are made by a Poor Law auditor, there is a right of appeal; whereas in Ireland there is no right of appeal?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware.

BURIALS ACT (SCOTLAND)—PRIVATE CEMETERIES COMPANIES.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Secretary for Scotland has received a Memorial from the Philosophical Society of Glasgow to amend the Burial Act, so as to place the private Cemeteries Companies of Scotland under the same Regulations as the burial grounds; whether Dr. Churton, the Medical Officer of Health for the Burgh of Hillhead, has reported the Dalbeth Cemetery, where the pit burial system is carried on, to be "a nuisance within the meaning of the Burial Grounds Act;" and, whether the Government intend to legislate on the matter?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): No, Sir; no Memorial has been received or information sent to the Secretary for Scotland's Office on this subject.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—SCIENTIFIC WORK—PROFESSOR COSSAR EWART.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to the statements of Professor Cossar Ewart in *The Scotsman* of the 14th of April, regarding the scientific work of the Fishery Board for Scotland; whether the inquiries and investigations of the Board

> "Go to show that an enormous destruction of young and immature fish of all kinds takes place annually in the territorial waters, and that everything has been done to destroy some of the most productive mussel beds;"

and, if this is the case, whether the Government are prepared to propose further legislation to prevent these evils?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention has been called to Professor Ewart's words as quoted; and I find that the Professor adds that the inquiries into the matter must proceed much further before any lasting benefit can result from them. It would, therefore, be premature to propose legislation as to the result of an inquiry admittedly incomplete.

INLAND REVENUE—LIVERPOOL STAMP OFFICE.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether arrangements have been made by which documents are now stamped at the Liverpool Stamp Office, with the exception of bills of lading, which have still to be forwarded to the Manchester Office to be stamped, causing much delay and inconvenience; and, whether, considering the large number of bills of lading used daily in Liverpool, arrangements can be made to have these documents stamped at the Liverpool Office?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): Yes, Sir; arrangements have been made for stamping documents at Liverpool, and it is fully expected that they will come into operation on the 1st day of May. The Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue proposes to take an early opportunity to visit Liverpool; and he will then go into the question of placing a recording press there for stamping bills of lading.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—THE SHERIFF PRINCIPAL OF LANARKSHIRE.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the increasing work, administrative and judicial, falling upon the Sheriff Principal of Lanarkshire, and the consequent accumulations of appeals to the Sheriff Principal in the Sheriff Court in that county, and the delay which occurs in disposing of them; and, whether Government will consider the propriety of seeking from Parliament powers, such as they possess in the case of the illness of Sheriffs Principal, to make extra temporary appointments to the office of Sheriff Principal when necessary to enable arrears of judicial work to be overtaken?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I have made inquiries, and find that had there been no arrears of work when the present Sheriff took office there would have been practically no arrears now. In consequence of the weak health of the late Mr. Clark, and the great and exceptional pressure resulting from two general and keenly-contested elections taking place within one year in a county returning 13 members, considerable arrears had accumulated when the present Sheriff took up the work. The Sheriff expresses his confident expectation that he will be able to work off these arrears, and I therefore do not think it advisable to make any proposal to disturb existing arrangements. I propose, however, to call for a Report from the Sheriff at the end of the present year, and will then consider the position of matters. I think I ought further to say that there seems strong reason to doubt whether the expedient recommended in the latter paragraph of the Question would be a wise one, as it might tend to the accumulation of arrears if Sheriffs understood that Deputy Sheriffs would be appointed at the public expense to aid in clearing them off.

Dr. CAMERON: Are there any other cases where these arrears exist?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: No.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—ABROGATION OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH FISHERIES CONVENTION, 1839.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) (for Mr. Coghill) (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been directed to an article in *Blackwood's Magazine* for April on the Police of the North Sea; and, whether any steps are being taken to abrogate the Anglo-French Fisheries Convention, 1839, and the Regulations framed thereunder, and to extend the North Sea Convention to the seas between Great Britain and France, in substitution for the Anglo-French Fisheries Convention, 1867, as contemplated by section 24 of "The Sea Fisheries Act, 1883?"

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I have seen the article referred to. Negotiations between this country and France have been for some time going on in the direction indicated in the hon. Member's Question.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BALTINGLASS UNION—MR. DOUGLAS.

Mr. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the allegation that a letter purporting to be signed by a Mr. Douglas, and inciting a rate collector of the Baltinglass Union to put a false date to a receipt for rates, was written but not delivered, because it was intercepted, and that the letter referred to is now in the hands of *The Leinster Leader*, who offers to have its genuineness tested at a public inquiry; and, whether, in consequence of this allegation, and in consideration of the serious charge it involves, he will order a sworn inquiry into all the facts of the case?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have no knowledge with regard to the letter referred to beyond the fact that its existence was alleged in the hon. Member's previous Question, and therefore I cannot give an answer one way or the other. I would, however, suggest to the hon. Member that the best course to take would be to arrange that the letter should be sent to the Local Government Board, with full proofs of its authenticity, and the method of its interception.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Would the right hon. Gentleman grant a sworn inquiry if the letter were sent on?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I can make no promise.

Mr. CLANCY: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen a letter from Mr. Dagg, clerk to the Baltinglass Union, to the Secretary of the Irish Local Government Board, stating that Mr. Driver, the rate collector, had the same request made to him by another person; and does the right hon. Gentleman consider it any part of his duty to inquire who it was?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the letter.

Mr. CLANCY: It has been addressed to your Secretary in Dublin.

PRESUMPTION OF LIFE LIMITATION (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1881.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, When the Bill to amend "The Presumption of Life Limitation (Scotland) Act, 1881," which he promised on the 16th of March, will be introduced?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The words used on the 16th of March were that I hoped but was unable to give any definite undertaking. I still hope, and I am still unable to give any definite undertaking.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he referred to a previous promise, given on the 10th of August last year.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I do not hold myself bound by any previous promises. I only hold myself bound by my last answer.

CHURCH AND DISSENT—THE WESLEYANS AT HAREWOOD.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in *The Times*, of the 16th of April, referring to a correspondence between Lord Harewood and the Wesleyan Body; whether it is a fact, as there stated, that Lord Harewood has abolished the restrictions by which he prevented the Wesleyans from holding Divine Service during Church hours, or from having a Sunday School, or from celebrating the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the village of Harewood; and, whether such restrictions of the freedom of public worship are legal; and, if so, whether the Government will take steps, by legislation, to render illegal all such limitations by an individual of the free exercise of the right of public worship by a religious community?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: I am informed by Lord Harewood that the facts stated in the newspaper paragraph referred to are correct. I have already stated that the restrictions mentioned in that paragraph were imposed under an agreement 70 years old, under which the Wesleyan Chapel was held, and I am unable to give an opinion as to the legal validity of such an agreement. The Government are not prepared to legislate on this subject, as they have no reason to suppose that there is any cause for the interference of Parliament.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON MALE SERVANTS—EXEMPTION.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether men servants employed to look after racehorses are specially exempted from the tax on male servants; and, whether he will consider the desirability of discontinuing this exemption, and of applying whatever revenue might thus be obtained towards the relief of hardships caused by the proposed Cart and Wheel Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The first Question which the hon. Member puts is one that I answered in June last. I then said that grooms in racing stables are treated in exactly the same way as regards Licence Duty as grooms in any other stables. If the racing stables are public, the grooms are exempt from Licence Duty, as are all attendants in ordinary trade stables; if the stables are private a licence is required. Thus there is no exemption, and the second part of the hon. Member's Question consequently falls to the ground.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—TRANSFER OF EXISTING LICENCES.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will lay a Return upon the Table of the House showing the amounts paid for existing licences and taxation proposed to be transferred in each county; the Treasury grants now paid to each county; the proportion of the Probate Duty which it is estimated each county would receive on the basis of its indoor pauperism; the estimated amount of expenditure for main roads in each county; and the general county expenditure to which the whole county contributes?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have more than once stated the difficulties connected with such a Return, which will prevent it being a reliable guide to what will be the financial results of our proposals, but I am very anxious to meet the evident wish of the House; and if it be understood that I cannot vouch for its absolute accuracy, I will endeavour to prepare an Estimate such as that suggested in the Question, and lay it on the Table of the House. With regard to the information asked for in the last sentence of the Question, I may say that the Annual Abstract of the County Treasurer's Accounts for the year ended Lady Day, 1887, has already been presented, and will very shortly be issued.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would give the same information with regard to Scotland?

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir. The Local Government Board has no information with regard to Scotland.

MR. ESSLEMONT asked, whether any information on the subject could be had?

MR. RITCHIE asked the hon. Member to address his Question to the Representative of the Scotch Office.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The right hon. Gentleman answered very precisely with reference to existing taxes. Would he give us the same information as to future taxes?

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir; I am afraid that it is not possible for me to do so. I understand that there has been a general

Estimate formed as to what the result would be; but no attempt has been made to allocate the amount for each county.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Would the right hon. Gentleman let us have the Estimate which has been made?

Mr. RITCHIE: It is not easy, and there is not any Estimate as to what will be the proceeds of the new taxes. It is not easy to attempt to say precisely, or to divide the product for each county. I understand there is no such information.

Mr. CHILDERS said, that when a fresh tax was being imposed it was usual to give every possible information, although some might be conjectural.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the right hon. Gentleman had sufficient experience to know the enormous difficulty in the way of estimating the amount to be derived in every county and in every locality from new taxes.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER inquired, from what sources the right hon. Gentleman derived the Estimate that Staffordshire would contribute £26,000 a-year; and why he could not supply the same information with regard to other counties?

Mr. RITCHIE said, he took the proportion, in the locality he was dealing with, of the new tax as was raised from the old; but this was by no means a reliable basis of calculation.

COUNTY ELECTIONS — RETURNING OFFICERS FEES TO SHERIFFS AND UNDER SHERIFFS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the appointment of Returning Officer in any division of a county can be made contingent upon payment of a fee to the Sheriff or Under Sheriff; and, whether a Sheriff or Under Sheriff is entitled to demand a fee of two guineas in respect of the appointment either from an applicant for the post or from the person actually appointed?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: This is a question of law as to which it is not for me to give any opinion. The Secretary of State is advised, however, that under the Statute it lies within the discretion of the Sheriff to appoint a deputy or not, and that he is at liberty to demand from the Parliamentary candidates such payment as does not exceed that authorized for professional or other assistance by 38 & 39 *Vict.*, c. 84. He does not seem to have any authority to demand payment from the applicant for the post or from the person actually appointed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, what authority had control over matters of this kind, and to whom he should put the Question?

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, it was for the Law Courts to ascertain the rights and liabilities of public officers.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, this was a serious matter. Sheriffs and Under Sheriffs were levying blackmail on candidates for certain offices. He begged to ask the First Lord of the Treasury which Department had charge of this matter?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he was not in a position to give an answer then; but he would inquire.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether, in the event of his laying before the right hon. Gentleman the correspondence which had recently passed between a Sub-Sheriff and a candidate on this subject, he would be prepared to give an explicit answer?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he could not promise to give an explicit answer; but he would promise to give the best answer he could.

EXCISE—DUTIES ON RETAIL HOUSES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, taking into consideration that in the Metropolitan area the houses of retailers of spirits are kept open until 12.30 a.m., he will agree to add 100 per cent instead of 20 per cent proposed in the Local Government Bill, and make a corresponding reduction to owners of houses who will close at an earlier time than 12.30 a.m.; for instance, if the value of the house is under £100, the duty is at present £25; will he consent to increase the duty to £50; but when the owner agrees by his licence to close at 12 o'clock, to reduce to £40; 11.30 p.m., to £30; 11 p.m., to £25; 10.30 p.m., to £20?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No, Sir; I am unable to agree to the proposal of the hon. Member that the Licensed Victuallers' Duty shall be paid in the proportion suggested in the Question of the hon. Member.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — EFFECT OF THE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS UPON THE METROPOLIS.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, after the information he has given to the House as to the effect of his financial proposals upon the town of Wolverhampton, showing the possibility of forming a close estimate of such effect on a particular district, he will now lay upon the Table of the House a similar statement for the Metropolis?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is proposed that the Return now under consideration should extend to the Metropolis.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—PUBLIC GALLERIES, MUSEUMS, &c. IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will procure Reports on the hours of opening, the organization of staff, and the conditions of admission to Public Galleries and Collections owned by the State or the Municipalities, on Sunday, in certain selected cities in Europe and the United States?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): We will endeavour to procure the Returns desired from Paris, Berlin, and Brussels.

MR. LAWSON: And from New York and Philadelphia.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Very well.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SENTENCES AT QUARTER SESSIONS.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in supplying, in the form of a Return, the information asked for by the hon. Member for South Birmingham (Mr. Powell-Williams), with reference to sentences of six months' imprisonment passed at Quarter Sessions, he will be good enough to include information showing the number of cases in which such sentences were passed on persons who had pleaded guilty of having been previously convicted?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam): The information sought by the hon. Baronet would be a very useful addition to the Return of the hon. Member for South Birmingham. The additional searches and references involved will, undoubtedly, delay the production of that Return; but I will endeavour to arrange that the whole of this information shall be presented to the House in such time as will enable the House to use it in exercising its judgment on some stage of the Local Government Bill.

WAR OFFICE—COURT MARTIAL ON MAJOR TEMPLER.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Of what nature was the "open arrest" to which Major Templer was for several weeks subjected; to what portion of the manufacture in connection with balloons did the secrets which he was charged with revealing relate; what other moneys were paid to detectives, as pay for themselves or for the purpose of obtaining witnesses, in addition to those paid to the Aclands, either by the War Office or the Treasury; whether any apology has been tendered to Major Templer by the War Office, or any reparation is to be made to him; when the inquiry now being held is expected to be concluded; and, whether the evidence and Report will be made public?

COLONEL EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has yet been able to consider all the circumstances connected with the recent Court Martial on Major Templer; and, if so, what conclusion he has arrived at?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The open arrest to which Major Templer was subjected was that laid down in the Queen's Regulations. The hon. Member is probably aware that arrest is of two kinds—"close" and "open." In answer to the second Question I cannot, in the interests of the Public Service, give the exact detail of the secret which he was charged with revealing; but it relates to certain processes connected with the skins of which the balloon is made. In answer to the third Question, I am informed from the Metropolitan Police Office that the only other moneys referred to will be the expenses of the one detective employed, who will receive his usual pay and allowances for the days he was engaged. In answering the remaining Questions, I may be allowed to answer also that of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Gainsborough Division on the same subject. I was unwilling to make any general statement until I had had time to receive Reports on the proceedings, and to consider the whole of the circumstances connected with the Court Martial. The House is, perhaps, not aware that as soon as the War Office was advised that a *primâ facie* case existed the whole conduct of the proceedings was handed over to the Solicitor to the Treasury, whose Report I have received to-day. I have now considered the whole matter, with the assistance of my Military Advisers. There can be no doubt that, although the War Office was advised that a *primâ facie* case existed, the result of the Court Martial has absolutely cleared Major Templer from the slightest suspicion of any sort or kind. I have seen Major Templer, and expressed to him my satisfaction that he should have so completely vindicated his character; and I need scarcely add that, in common with everyone else, I regret the grave inconveniences and anxiety to which he has been subjected. He will resume his duties at Chatham with the full confidence of the Government, and will be re-imbursed any expenses which this inquiry may have entailed upon him. With respect to Major Elsdale, we are of opinion that, while there appears to be no ground for attributing to Major Elsdale any other motive than that of zeal for the Public Service, it is not desirable that he should be retained at Chatham, and he will accordingly be transferred to other duties.

Mr. HANBURY: May I asked who advised the War Office that a *primâ facie* case had been made out?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: We were so advised by the Judge Advocate General's Department, and the Report on the subject was signed by the Deputy Judge Advocate General.

Mr. HANBURY: Then I beg to give Notice that I shall move a reduction of the salary of the Judge Advocate General.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART TAX—EXEMPTION OF CONTRACTORS.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether in the case of the Wheel Tax he will make some saving in favour of cart owners who are under contracts with Corporations and others which have been entered into prior to the Budget Statement?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Without pledging myself in any way, I may say that the point is being considered.

SCOTLAND—DISTURBANCES IN LEWIS—TRIAL OF THE PRISONERS—THE CROWN WITNESS, DONALD MACLEOD.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he has yet completed the inquiries promised by him on the 9th ultimo, into the circumstances attending the committal to an asylum as a lunatic of Donald Macleod, a Crown witness brought from Stornoway to Edinburgh to give evidence in the recent trial of the Barvas Crofters; if he would state how long Macleod was detained in the asylum, and at whose cost; and, whether there is reason to believe that Macleod's insanity was, as alleged, the result of his being plied with drink by those in charge of him while being brought to Edinburgh to give his evidence?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I have made an inquiry. Macleod was detained in the asylum from March 7 to April 3 at the cost of the City of Edinburgh, who have claimed the cost from his parish of domicile, and the claim has been admitted. At the request of Mr. Helm, Macleod's employer, the doctor under whose care he was allowed a relative to take him home to Lewis. There is no reason to believe that he had been plied with or had taken drink. The evidence shows that he drank no spirits, and that he stated he could not drink whisky. He appears to have had one glass of beer, of which he took only part. All the doctors who saw him say that the symptoms did not in any way suggest that his malady was caused by intoxicants.

"MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACT" FOR INDIA.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can now give any information as to the probability of legislation in India on the lines of that inaugurated by the Merchandize Marks Act of last year in the United Kingdom, for the better protection of honest trading?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has every reason to believe that this subject continues to receive the careful attention of the Government of India. The Local Governments and Administrations have been consulted, which is the first step in Indian legislation; and the Secretary of State thinks it probable that legislation on the lines of the Merchandize Marks Act will take place.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—LOCAL TAXATION—THE PROBATE DUTY.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will grant a Return giving the amounts receivable in each county and in each city proposed by the Local Government Bill to be converted into a county, out of the Probate Duty set apart for relief of Local Taxation, both on the basis of a division according to indoor pauperism, and according to population?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I will see that this information is included in the Return I have undertaken to give in answer to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler).

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE STAMP DUTIES.

MR. ELTON (Somerset, Wellington) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his announcement that a heavy fine was to be imposed, in addition to the original Stamp Duty, on all deeds which had not been stamped immediately on their execution, if ever such deeds were adduced in evidence in a Court of Law, Whether he will introduce some provision in favour of deeds executed long before his proposed change in the law was made known, inasmuch as it has been the general practice of solicitors, in the case of informal written undertakings and many instruments regulating family property, to advise that it was not necessary to have such documents stamped unless and until some disagreement arose, and it became necessary to produce them in a Court of Law?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Question of the hon. Member seems to show the urgent necessity for the change I propose, and the loss to the Revenue from the absence of any certain penalty for failing to stamp instruments which the law expects to be stamped. But I can re-assure my hon. Friend as to the past. The 16th section of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, which deals with this question, applies only to instruments executed after the passing of the Act.

CROWN RENTS AND ROYALTIES—PREROGATIVE RIGHTS TO PRECIOUS METALS.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What are the rights of the Crown as to precious metals in England and Wales; whether there is any distinction as to gold and silver found on freehold ground between this country and the Colonies; if not, what reason exists for enforcing a Royalty upon these metals in the United Kingdom which is not enforced in the Colonies; whether, in the Colonies, all minerals found on freehold lands have been surrendered by the Crown to the freeholders; and, whether he will consent to the appointment of a Royal Commission to consider the whole question of Crown Rents and Royalties?

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked, Whether, if the right hon. Gentleman consented to the appointment of a Commission, he would extend its scope to an inquiry into the title of private landowners?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Crown has an ancient prerogative right to all mines containing the precious metals, and this right was judicially recognized in a famous case ("The Queen *v.* the Earl of Northumberland") which occurred in the reign of Elizabeth. The original right of the Crown to mines containing the precious metals in the Colonies was governed entirely by the law of England; but the Crown has in most cases transferred this prerogative right to the Colonial Governments, who have thus acquired the power of making Regulations in regard to the granting and working of these mines; but I do not know whether in any Colony the right to these mines has been surrendered to the freeholders. Without consultation with the Government generally, I could not undertake to grant the Royal Commission which the hon. Gentleman asks for.

MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACT — THE BRITISH COLONIES.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can give the House any information as to the probability of legislation in the British Colonies on the lines of the Act passed last year in the United Kingdom, under the title of the Merchandize Marks Act, for the protection of honest trading?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Since the date of my last answer in the House on this subject, some further replies have been received from the Colonies. As the matter now stands, 16 Colonies have not yet replied; 14 have promised legislation; three others have introduced it; and in two others—namely, the Straits and St. Helena—Ordinances have been passed and are now in force.

THE SEED ACT, 1880—MOHILL BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, the sum borrowed by the Mohill Board of Guardians under the Seed Act, 1880, was £8,803; whether out of this sum there is only at present in arrear £543, which the Guardians are unable to collect, consequent upon the great destitution prevailing amongst some of the recipients of this loan, and other casualties; whether the present Poor Rate and County Cess in the Union amount to 7*s.* 8*d.* in the £1 on the valuation; and, whether, under the circumstances, the Government will insist on the repayment of this sum, borrowed during a period of famine, when 94 per cent of the original debt has been repaid?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: The facts are as stated in paragraphs one and two of the Question. As regards the third paragraph, I have not been able to ascertain whether the amount of Poor Rate and County Cess is accurately stated. The Commissioners of Public Works have been instructed to consult with the Local Government Board whenever circumstances appear to justify a postponement of the claim for repayment; but I am unable to advise the remission of outstanding balances of Seed Rate.

ADMIRALTY (SHIPS, &c.) — H.M.S. "BUZZARD."

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, How long ago it is since Her Majesty's new sloop *Buzzard* first broke down; whether he can state the cause of the first and second breaks-down, and where the machinery was built; and, the cost and length of time occupied in repairing the damage, inclusive of the wages and provisions of the officers and crew of ship and engine room?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): On the 8th of November, 1887, the contractors' steam trial of the *Buzzard* was stopped in consequence of heating of piston rod and joint leaking; but there was no breakdown of machinery. The only breakdown of machinery which has occurred was on January 31, 1888, which was caused by a tool left in one of the cylinders by a workman employed by the contractors. The machinery was built by the Barrow Shipbuilding Company. The cost of making good the defects was borne by the contractors, and is not known by the Admiralty. The time occupied in replacing the broken rods was 10 days. The ship was not in commission; but was manned for the trial only by officers and men of the Steam Reserve, so that no additional cost for wages and provisions was involved.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—CLAUSE 48—CORONERS' INQUESTS.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) (for Mr. LEAKE) (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can give any indication of the character of the credentials which ought to be tendered to satisfy a Coroner holding an inquest on the body of a person whose death may have been caused by an explosion or accident in a mine, that the person tendering such credentials has, in accordance with Clause 48, Section 8, of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," been appointed by the order in writing of the majority of the workmen employed in the mine where the fatality occurred?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: If the order in writing appointing a representative to attend an inquest on the body of a person whose death may have been caused by an explosion or accident in a mine is signed by a majority of the workmen, that would, I apprehend, be a sufficient credential to satisfy the Coroner under Section 8 of Clause 48 of the Act of 1887; or the majority of the workmen may authorize any person to reduce to writing on their behalf the order of appointment in which they have concurred. This section will, I trust, be construed by Coroners liberally, and without unnecessary technicalities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 15—REPAIR OF MAIN ROADS.

MR. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the fact, that under Clause 15, Section 2, of the Local Government Bill, a County District retaining under its own care the maintenance and repair of main roads within the district will only be entitled to receive from the County Council one-half the cost of such maintenance and repair under "The Highways and Locomotive Act, 1878," and will lose the present grant in aid from the Exchequer; and, whether, inasmuch as such an enactment will tend to throw the maintenance and repair of main roads entirely on County Councils, and discourage that local, and in great part voluntary, superintendence which is so essential to efficient work and economical expenditure, he will so amend Clause 15, that a County District wishing to retain the charge of its own main roads shall not be in a worse financial position than are the present Local Authorities in similar circumstances?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As I stated on Tuesday last, in reply to a Question of the hon. Member for the Leigh Division of Lancashire (Mr. Caleb Wright), the contribution of the County Council in the case referred to will be based not on one-half of the expenditure in respect of the maintenance of the roads prior to the passing of the Bill, but on the total expenditure on account of the maintenance of the roads. This contribution will be in lieu of any grant which may have previously been received.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONTRACTS FOR SWORD BAYONETS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, When the contract with Messrs. Wilkinson for the supply of 200,000 sword bayonets was made; what was the Committee which decided upon the shape and strength of those bayonets as contracted for, when did it sit, and when did it make its Report; what was the Committee which sat after the contract had been made, and for what reasons did it alter the decision as to strength and shape upon which the contract was made; whether the contract has been formally altered to meet the alteration in the weapons contracted for, whether the price is to be the same though the weapon is altered, and in what instalments, and at what periods, these 200,000 sword bayonets are now to be delivered; whether they are to be of Home manufacture; and, whether a contract has since been given for a large supply of other bayonets of a different pattern, to whom was it given, and when is it to be completed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No contract with Messrs. Wilkinson for a supply of 200,000 sword bayonets has been made; but a contract for the supply of 150,000 was signed on May 27, 1887. The Committee which reported in favour of this sword bayonet was the Committee on Small Arms, under the Presidency of Major-General Philip Smith, C.B., now commanding the 2nd Brigade at Aldershot. The Committee which sat after the contract had been made was this same Committee. It altered its decision as to the strength and shape of the sword bayonet; as it found, on experiment, that the shape originally recommended was not suitable for the small-bore rifle adopted during 1887. The contract has not yet been formally altered to meet this change; but Messrs. Wilkinson have been fully informed of what has been going on, and the contract will be amended accordingly. Fifty thousand sword bayonets of the original pattern (subject to some very minor alterations) are being manufactured to meet current wants. The dates for delivery of the remaining 100,000 of the new pattern will be decided when the contract is remodelled. All these sword bayonets will be of Home manufacture. No contract has since been given for a large supply of other bayonets.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—TOWN COUNCILS OF BOROUGHS.

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Town Councils of Boroughs which are counties will be District Councils as well as County Councils; or, whether the effect of the Bill will be, that in those boroughs the provisions relating to District Councils will be inoperative?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Clause 50 of the Bill provides that the part of the Bill relating to District Councils shall not apply to boroughs which are counties in themselves. The clause, however, further provides that the powers of Justices out of Sessions, which in other cases would be transferred to the District Council, shall, where a borough is a county of itself, be transferred to the Town Council.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—EXPORTS OF FLANNELS.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If the item of 4,599,700 yards of flannel, shown in the Board of Trade Returns for March of this year, page 66, and exhibiting a very large increase in the export of that material over the corresponding quarter of last year, is limited to woollen flannels, or includes "flannelets" and other similar textiles made from cotton?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Customs Department have informed me that the item flannels in the Returns does not include flannelets or other similar textiles made from cotton. If flannelets, or other similar textiles, are so described on the export documents, they are registered as cottons. The cause of the increase in the item of flannels in the quarter ended 31st March, 1888, as compared with the corresponding quarter of last year, is that during the quarter ended 31st March last "woollen shirtings mixed" were exported very largely to Australasia and the United States, and that such goods are registered as "flannels."

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE ENNIS INQUIRY—DEPOSITION OF POLICE-CONSTABLE WATSON.

MR. LALOR (Queen's County, Leix) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the Report in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 16th instant of the proceedings under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act before Captain Keogh, against Mr. Donleavy, editor of *The Clare Independent*, on the 14th instant, in the Courthouse at Ennis, from which it appears that the constable (Watson) was handed a deposition, dated 9th April, which he stated that he had signed, and owing to which three men were charged with stone throwing; and, whether he has noticed the following question and answer of the witness:—

> "Mr. Harrington: I have only one question to ask you. In the deposition did you say one word about stones being thrown from the buildings?—No, I did not;"

and, whether he will inquire into the circumstances under which this deposition was signed? The hon. Gentleman said, the last paragraph of the Question appeared on the Paper in a different form to that in which he handed it in. The paragraph as he wrote it ran—

> "Whether it is usual for the police in Ireland to sign their depositions, prepared for them without even——"

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That part of the Question was struck out by myself, because it contravened the usual practice relating to Questions.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Question was only put down last night, and I have been, therefore, unable to receive a reply from Ireland to my communication; but I may say that the report in *The Freeman's Journal*, as to what has been passing in the Court House at Ennis, is in no way to be depended upon.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the deposition contained matter which was opposed to the evidence actually given by the constable?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman must give Notice of that Question.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): On what information does the right hon. Gentleman state to the House that the reports in *The Freeman's Journal* of matters that took place in a public Court are not to be depended upon; and is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to make that statement outside the House, so as to afford the proprietors of *The Freeman's Journal* an opportunity of testing its accuracy?

[No reply.]

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Might I also ask whether the reports in other newspapers which reported these proceedings are not substantially identical with *The Freeman's Journal*?

[No reply.]

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION.

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is now able to state when the Government will introduce the promised Bill on Reformatory and Industrial Schools?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: I am afraid that I cannot yet fix a date when the Bills on reformatory and industrial schools will be introduced. My right hon. Friend will endeavour to bring them before the House as early as possible.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — CORPORATIONS OF ENGLAND AND WALES —RETURN.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will give the House a Return showing the total number of Aldermen in the Corporations of England and Wales, and the number of Aldermen who have been selected to that office from outside the Corporations during the last six years?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have no official information on these points; and the particulars required could only be obtained by applying to the several Town Councils for it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE LICENSING CLAUSES.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill, compensation will be granted in the case of non-renewal of off-licences; and, whether the renewal of such licences will be refused for any other reason than those for which they can now be refused by the present authorities?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The power to refuse renewal of a licence applies to all intoxicating liquor licences. Any person feeling aggrieved by the refusal to renew may make a claim for compensation.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Does that apply to off-licenses?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked, whether a certain class of beer dealers' licences dealt with by the Act passed by the right hon. Gentleman himself some years ago were not subject to refusal by the licensing Magistrates in their districts, and without any compensation?

MR. RITCHIE: The Bill expressly provides, in so many words, that where a claim for compensation is put in with reference to the licences referred to by my hon. Friend, the provisions of the Act to which he refers shall be fully considered.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ELECTIVE COUNTY COUNCILLORS — THE COUNTY OF LONDON—ELECTORAL DIVISIONS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can state (approximately) the number of Elective County Councillors which will be apportioned to the boroughs and the rest of the county respectively in some large county, and also in some small county, in accordance with section 2, sub-section (3) of the Local Government Bill? The hon. Gentleman also asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman can state (approximately) the number of Electoral Divisions into which the County of London will be divided in accordance with section 52, sub-section (6) of the Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The number of Elective County Councillors to be assigned to each county, and the number of Electoral Divisions into which the County of London is to be divided, are under my consideration; but I am not at present in a position to give the information desired by the hon. Member.

In reply to Mr. JAMES STUART,

MR. RITCHIE said, I intend to lay a statement dealing with all these questions upon the Table of the House before the House is called upon to consider them in Committee.

PRISONS REGULATIONS (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF A PRISONER IN GALWAY GAOL.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a statement of Mr. John Sweeney, lately an untried prisoner in Galway Gaol, in which he complains that, on his arrival in Galway Gaol, his religious emblems were taken from him by the warders, though afterwards restored at the Governor's orders; that his suspenders were taken away, and that he only retained possession of his frieze coat after a severe struggle with the warders; and that, to prevent his clothes being taken from him in the night, he was obliged to sleep without undressing; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the truth of these allegations? In putting this Question I desire to point out that the summary of the declaration of the prisoner, as given in the Question, is not mine, and that I gave the original statement——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! There is a reason why it was summarised. It was that the Question of the hon. Member extended over two pages of foolscap, and it was almost impossible to put down a Question of that length; and as fair a summary as was thought possible was substituted.

MR. CLANCY: I do not desire to dispute the statement, Sir, that it extended over two pages of foolscap; but it was very loosely written, and my impression is that it would not have occupied very much more space than the present summary on the paper.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): It appears that the man in question was searched on entering the prison according to the invariable practice. His religious emblems were removed, but were soon afterwards restored by the Governor. There was no struggle with the warders, but Sweeney used very abusive language. There was not the slightest intention of removing his clothes during the night.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): With regard to this practice of depriving prisoners of their suspenders, ostensibly to prevent their hanging themselves, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that while suspenders are denied to prisoners, they are allowed handkerchiefs and neckties, with which they could perform the operation of strangulation as well?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid these are details of prison administration with which I am not familiar; but if the hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper about suspenders and handkerchiefs, I shall be very glad to answer him.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: If the right hon. Gentleman requires any special information I will provide it for him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. CLANCY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the acts which he admits were committed are not illegal acts as against an untried prisoner; and, if so, whether he will inquire into the matter, so as to prevent the recurrence of these illegalities in the future?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have inquired into the matter, and it is in consequence of my inquiry that I have given my answer to the hon. Gentleman. I suppose that if there have been illegalities it is in the power of the prisoner to have his remedy at law.

Mr. CLANCY: Then are we to understand that Governors of Irish Prisons may perpetrate illegalities at their pleasure?

[No reply.]

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—MUSSEL BEDS.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government, in pursuance of their pledge given on the 12th of May, 1887, have asked the Scotch Fishery Board to advise them as to whether anything should be done in regard to mussel beds, and also what should be done; and, whether the Government will introduce a measure on the subject this Session?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Yes, Sir. The Secretary for Scotland has received a Report from the Fishery Board, and a Special Report is now being considered by them. I cannot answer the second Question until that Report has been received.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES—NOTICE OF CASES.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of Dr. John Makinson Fox, Medical Officer of Health to the Northwich Rural Sanitary Authority, on Friday last, in which he recounts the difficulties he experiences in protecting the public from the spread of infectious disease, through the absence of a compulsory notification to Medical Officers of Health of the occurrence of cases of such disease, and declares that the law appears to care less for the health of human beings than for that of swine; and, whether he can hold out any hope that this defect in the law may be speedily remedied?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has been called to the Report referred to; and I may state that the Government hope to be able to introduce a Bill to deal with the compulsory notification of infectious disease.

ARMY ESTIMATES—VOLUNTEER REGIMENTAL CAMPS.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, On what principle the reduction of 25 per cent in the Vote for Volunteer Regimental Camps has been made; whether the reduction is intended to be permanent; and, whether the Inspectors will be instructed to make allowance in their Reports for the diminished efficiency likely to result from the restriction?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The money taken for Volunteer camps has not been reduced; but a larger proportion has been allowed for encampment with the Regular Forces, which is considered to afford the better military instruction. The number of applicants for the grant has, however, increased so largely that only some 75 per cent can be permitted to have it. The limit of the grant has not yet been decided; but, having in view the increase in the cost of the Volunteers, amounting to over £65,000 in the Estimates of the current year, it will be necessary to restrict in some degree the numbers who can have the advantage of this special training. It is not proposed to issue any such instruction to Inspectors as that suggested. The several corps can encamp in their turn; but there are many corps which never express the desire to do so.

MR. TOMLINSON asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman meant that there was a probability that all applicants would be allowed to take into camp the full number of men who wished to go?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I did not say that. There must be a reduction; but the War Office have not fully considered what is to be the extent of the reduction.

MR. TOMLINSON asked, whether it was not the opinion of the Military Authorities that the increased efficiency of the Volunteers gained by their going into camp did not more than compensate for the increased amount of the grant?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I attach enormous importance to the instruction of Volunteers in camp; but we think there is more advantage derived from instruction in camp if it takes place where Regular soldiers are being trained.

LAND COURT (IRELAND)—RETURNS.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of landed estates now under the control or jurisdiction of the Land Court of Ireland, and the number of their agricultural tenants; and showing also in what number of cases during the last two years abatements of arrears of rent have been made by orders of the Judges, and in what number of cases applications for such abatements have been refused by the Judges?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am making inquiries of the officers of the Court to find out whether the Return asked for by the right hon. Gentleman is a practical Return or not.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 34—CORONERS—TRANSFER OF POWERS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under Clause 36 of the Local Government Bill, it is proposed to transfer the powers, duties, and liabilities of the Town Councils of Boroughs in respect to Coroners to the County Councils; whether, under the provisions of a Bill introduced in "another place" by a Member of the Government, it is proposed to transfer the same powers to the Lord Chancellor; and, whether he will state which of the two Bills will receive the largest measure of support from the Government?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I presume my hon. Friend refers to Clause 34 of the Local Government Bill. If so, I would point out that the clause only affects Quarter Sessions Boroughs with a population under 10,000. It is proposed that in these boroughs the power of appointing Coroners should cease; and the duties of these officers, so far as these boroughs are concerned, will be transferred to the County Coroners; but the Bill does not propose to make any alteration in the mode by which County Coroners are appointed. The words of the clause are, no doubt, liable to misconstruction; and I will take care that it is amended in Committee, so as to make the matter quite clear.

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—LEGISLATION.

An hon. MEMBER (for Mr. W. A. MACDONALD) (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Government intend to introduce their long promised legislation on the subject of Irish Public Works?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I have already answered this Question, Sir.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—EDUCATION SCHEMES.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the fact that Scotch Educational Schemes are not laid before and considered by a duly constituted meeting of the Scotch Education Department, but are considered and adjudicated upon by the Secretary for Scotland, the Government are prepared to bring in a Bill to amend the Educational Endowments (Scotland)

Act, by substituting the Secretary for Scotland for the Scotch Education Department; or, whether the Government will take steps that the practice in future shall be made conformable to the existing law?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): All orders, decisions, and other acts of the Scotch Education Department are done by the authority of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council on Education in Scotland, as indicated in the manner provided by Section 65 of the Education Act of 1872. The Secretary for Scotland is Vice President of that Committee; and as such is responsible, along with the Lord President, for the administration of the Department. There has been no change in the practice with respect to that administration, which is entirely in conformity with the existing law.

MR. CALDWELL asked, whether it was the fact that these schemes were considered only by the Vice President of the Council?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can only tell the hon. Member what the facts of the case are—namely, that the schemes have been dealt with in the manner prescribed by law.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE CONSTITUTION.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government are prepared to alter the composition of the Scotch Education Department by substituting for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Secretary two other Members of the Privy Council more intimately acquainted with Scotch affairs, and able to devote more time to the discharge of the important duties delegated to that Department by statute or otherwise?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government are not prepared to substitute other Members of the Privy Council for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Secretary upon the Scotch Education Committee. The presence of these Ministers on the Committee is essential, in view of the questions relating to finance, and to the administration of the Factory and similar Acts which come before the Committee.

MR. CALDWELL asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman could give a Return showing the attendance of these Ministers at the Committee?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No; I am afraid that I cannot give such a Return.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION, 1883—SEIZURE OF THE SMACK "LADY GODIVA."

In reply to Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby),

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) said: A despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Consul General at Hamburg to-day, enclosing a Report from the counsel employed by Her Majesty's Government to defend Funnell, in whose case my right hon. Friend has taken a great interest. The Judges decided against the application of the Public Prosecutor for the forfeiture of the nets and gear of the *Lady Godiva;* and unless the Crown should appeal against this judgment, application will be made for the release of the gear. The Judge declined to pronounce upon the question whether Funnell had been engaged in fishing within German territorial waters, and that of the right of British fishermen to sail within those limits did not arise.

GERMANY—HEALTH OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is in a position to give the House any information that will tend to allay anxiety with regard to the condition of the German Emperor?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I regret to have to inform the House that the condition of His Imperial Majesty is a cause of grave anxiety, not only to the people of Germany, but to all those who are allies and friends of that country. The last telegram we received is one from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin, dated half-an-hour after noon, to the effect that—

> "The Emperor had better night, but fever still high and not diminishing. Doctors say His Majesty's general condition not worse."

NOTICE OF MOTION.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I wish to give Notice that I shall to-morrow move that the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill be taken before the other Orders of the Day, as I understand that it is the general wish of the House that the debate upon the second reading of the measure should be concluded in the course of the Afternoon or Evening Sitting.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, that he had the first Notice upon the Paper to-morrow with reference to the Continuation Schools; and he wished to know whether the Government would undertake to give facilities for the discussion of that subject on a future occasion?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member is, I am sure, expressing the wish of several other hon. Members with regard to the subject to which he refers; but I am afraid that I cannot undertake to give him a day for its discussion. The hon. Member will, if on no other occasion, be able to raise a discussion with regard to the Continuance Schools on the Education Vote.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he could state what interval would elapse between the second reading of the Local Government Bill and its being taken in Committee?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was afraid that must depend on the time that would be taken by other measures. The Government proposed to take the Budget Bill on Monday, and the Employers' Liability Bill and the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill would also have to be read a second time before the House could go into Committee on the Local Government Bill.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Will the Employers' Liability Bill be taken before the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not able to say at present.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[Bill 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [FIFTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee): Mr. Speaker, I think, before the debate on this important measure closes, that it is desirable that a much more extended reference should be made to its bearings upon the interests of the inhabitants of the Capital than has yet been made. I hope the Members for London will express their opinion on a matter so very closely affecting their constituencies, for, important as are the provisions of this Bill as they respect country districts, I believe that they must be regarded as infinitely more important as they affect the inhabitants of London, because this proposal amounts to giving them the germ, at any rate, of direct control over their affairs.

When the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) came to deal with the question of County Government, I apprehend that he found it inevitable, in dealing with London, to come to such a conclusion as is expressed in this Bill. The Metropolis is situated in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and Kent. He would find that either he must give to these counties administrative control over the Metropolis, analogous to that exercised over whole counties elsewhere—which is manifestly impossible—or that he must constitute London as a county by itself. He has taken the latter course; he has given to it more than the simple functions of administration, and he has done that because otherwise, I apprehend, the London County would have to receive the same amount of money as other counties receive, and that would have to be paid to the Metropolitan Board of Works—a condition of things which no one could contemplate with complacency. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman has constituted London into a county of itself, and that was in accordance with the Report of the Metropolitan Local Government Committee of 1867, which said—

> "The first step towards improved and efficient local government is to constitute the Metropolis a county of itself according to the principles recognized in the government of this country from the earliest times."

I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has found himself able to adopt that proposition. With regard to London, its condition as a county will be found, when this proposal is worked out, different from that of rural counties, inasmuch as it is exlusively urban, and demands special treatment.

With regard to powers, the right hon. Gentleman, in respect to other counties, applies the Municipal Corporations Act. It was the opinion in 1835 that an Act analogous to that should be applied to the whole of the Metropolitan area, and it was stated by Lord John Russell, in the House of Commons, that it was his intention to introduce a Bill applicable to the area of London. The right hon. Gentleman has not given powers to the County of London to the complete extent to which that Act would have gone; but he has travelled a considerable distance in that direction. He has given to it the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works, which has been offered up on the altar of the necessities of the situation. The organ of that Board has described this as "a daring and extraordinary proposal;" but, as a matter of fact, the abolition of the Metropolitan Board of Works has been received with universal joy and satisfaction in the House and out of it; and I think I may here adapt the words of King Lear, and say—"Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, the gods themselves throw incense."

The Bill that was introduced in 1884 proposed that there should be a Central Body with direct election to replace the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that there should be an enlargement of the City. The Bill of the right hon. Gentleman proposes to give to the County direct election, but it leaves the City alone. We want a subsidiary measure to give us control of the Local Authorities, but the Bill does not give that. The Metropolitan Board of Works and the City are dealt with more roughly in this Bill than they were by us, and if they were under the impression that we scourged them with whips, their opinion now must be that the right hon. Gentleman has scourged them with scorpions.

We gave to the City a representation based upon population and rateable value, and I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has found himself able to do what we and Her Majesty's Government of the day had not the courage to do, being apprehensive, if he will, of the comments of the Opposition—that is to say, to give a representation based on population; and, however he may extend Section 52, he will not give to the City anything like the proportion of representation which we proposed to give. The general position is, that the Metropolitan Board of Works dies at once—like a man who is beheaded—but the City of London is only to die gradually. It is to be surrounded by a pure and free organization, and the life at its centre cannot be prolonged for any considerable time. The Chairman of the London Municipal Council, as it may be called, will look upon the operations of the citizens in the square mile embracing the City very much as Lemuel Gulliver looked upon the operations of the inhabitants of Mildendo, the capital of Lilliput, and before long the City will become part of a great municipal organization.

In 1884 the right hon. Gentleman said a good deal with respect to our Bill. I am not going to resuscitate those opinions, or say more than that they were not much in accord with those he has found himself able to express now. He told us a good deal with respect to London opinion being against our Bill; but he will not find that that opinion, which he quoted against us, will very strongly support him. He will have the opportunity of finding that there is now a strong opinion in favour of what he proposes to give—namely, a strong directly elected Municipal Authority. I find that one hon. Gentleman representing a Metropolitan Division (Sir Roper Lethbridge), who expressed great satisfaction with this Bill, wished that the appointment of aldermen could be dropped. I remember contesting a

London constituency with him some years ago, and I would on this point say nothing more than that our opinions did not in 1885 coincide so closely as they do now.

This is a Bill embodying the principles which we have for so many years advocated, and I think it becomes us to consider carefully what is our duty with reference to it. The opinion that I have expressed here and elsewhere is that it is our business to support it. It is quite true that it is incomplete, and that it does not deal with the whole question of the Government of London. I am glad that it does not, because this would have imposed on the Bill a greater burden than it could bear, and because the right hon. Gentleman has not yet come to the conclusion at which he will probably arrive when he has fully considered the matter as to the true solution of the rest of the London question.

We want consolidation of Central Authorities, and the control of Local Authorities; but I think the latter may for the present be postponed. With respect to the proposal which the right hon. Gentleman has made as to introducing a Bill for the purpose of dealing hereafter with Local Authorities, may I make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman? It is a very difficult and extremely complex question. The right hon. Gentleman has constituted a London Authority that will undoubtedly be composed of men not merely familiar with London life, but with all the varying phases of London government. There are men who have acquired a knowledge of the government of the Board of Works, and a few who have mastered the system of Vestries. You will have men with a knowledge of each; but it is a most difficult thing to get men with a knowledge of London government as a whole, and I suggest that you should leave to this Body power to bring in a scheme for the regulation of the whole system of London Government. Now, the right hon. Gentleman said with respect to the Bill, as a whole, that it "would enable those who desired yet larger reforms to give it their hearty support." We shall accept it in that spirit, and it must be understood that the criticisms that I am about to offer on the Bill are governed by that intention. We want one Municipal Authority, directly elected for the control of our affairs.

The principle of direct election is to us a principle of very great importance, and if we had known that the Government were going to introduce a measure with respect to London, I am bound to say that we should have looked with the utmost anxiety to the manner in which they would deal with that matter. I am glad the right hon. Gentleman has not entertained the proposal of the Metropolitan Local Government Committee of 1867, that there should be a representation first, of owners of property, secondly, Crown nominees, thirdly, delegates from local bodies, and, fourthly, ratepayers. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal will be a great improvement upon that.

With regard to the Metropolitan Board of Works elections now, I moved for a Return in this House as to the number of people who voted for vestrymen in London, and I found that only one in 33 of the population took even that amount of interest in these bodies. When those interesting bodies are elected, it is in some cases their duty to elect members for District Boards, who retire after three years. The District Boards assist in the election of the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works, one-third of whom are elected over London every year. It has thus been wittily said that the Board is "a vestry vestrified to the n^{th} power." This system of election gives it neither responsibility nor public confidence. Now, the present plan is infinitely better, and is the same that was proposed by the Select Committee on Metropolitan Local Taxation of 1861. I say it is better than ours was, although I trust I may not be regarded as reflecting on the Government Bill of 1884, which Bill considered rateable value as well as population.

This Bill considers population only, as far as London is concerned. I am extremely glad to find that it is proposed that the elections shall be triennial, instead of being conducted on the system under the Municipal Corporations Act, which created confusion by annual elections of one-third. Lord John Russell, in 1835, said that—

> "Whether people elect for three years or for one year, they will generally elect the same persons."

And he said his object was to secure two-thirds who had "some experience in the management of the affairs of the town." Now, experience has shown that this is unnecessary. In the case of the London School Board the present system has resulted in the return of a large proportion of members having experience in the management, and with regard to the House of Commons I think I am right in saying that in the Election of 1885 nearly half the Members were changed.

Then, with respect to voters; I believe on this subject there is an observation which it is my duty to make in regard to London. We proposed in 1884 that there should be a citizen roll; and we had grounds for the expectation that this would be ultimately accepted as the roll for all purposes. This Bill proposes to have a list formed in accordance with the 9th section of the Municipal Corporations Act. I venture to suggest that, with regard to London for the purpose of these elections, this is unnecessary. Under the 17th section of the Metropolis Local Management Act of 1855 rated householders vote for the vestry, and the rate book is used as the roll. Now, between the rated householders and persons entitled to vote under Section 9 of the Municipal Act there is very little difference. It is possible for a minor to be a rated householder, but, of course, he could not vote under Section 9. But with respect to the City, of course, it is different. If you propose to make an entirely new roll there, that is a matter for consideration; but you at present have the Parliamentary franchise for electing the Common Council, and therefore it would be necessary to take off lodger and service voters and put on women voters.

With respect to the City, I see there is a power in the Bill as of which I am bound to say the right hon. Gentleman did not in his speech give us the slightest indication. I do not complain of that; but there is power to the Local Government Board to allocate to the City more than its population share of representation. The effect of this will be to isolate it still more, and cause a considerable amount of friction; and it is, moreover, an indefensible course, because there is nothing to be said with respect to the shopkeepers on Ludgate Hill which cannot be said of the shopkeepers in Bond Street.

There is one other point to which I propose to call attention. Under the Electors' Bill, Clause 3, Sub-section E, it is proposed for England and Wales that Section 21 of the Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act of 1878 shall not apply, and that the lists and register of voters shall be made out alphabetically. I draw attention to the fact that this will not do for London at all, and that it is necessary to have it altered, as our Register is now made up in street lists, and this to the advantage and by the consent of all parties concerned.

I understand that for areas for the first election the right hon. Gentleman proposes to take or utilize to a certain extent the vestry areas and the vestry wards. If that is the proposal, I think it is a very wise one, and I trust that the new London Authority will have power to frame a scheme, and consider whether administrative and electoral areas cannot in some way be made co-terminous.

With regard to the constitution of the Central London Authority, it is provided in Section 2, Sub-section 4, first as to the Chairman that he must be a Justice of the Peace, and in Section 36, Sub-section 5, the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works are transferred to the London Council. This is a matter not of comment but of inquiry. The Bill is not clear on this point, and I ask if Section 36 over-rides Section 2? Amongst the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works, under the Metropolis Local Management Act, is that of electing and paying a Chairman, and I wish to point out that, as regards London, it is necessary to have a Chairman and possibly a Deputy Chairman who ought to be paid. There have been paid Chairmen of the Metropolitan Board of Works, beginning with Mr. Thwaites and ending with Lord Magheramorne, and it is necessary that you should have one or two men who are prepared to give their whole time daily to the enormous amount of work which will fall to their share in these positions. There are 118 operative Acts of Parliament under which the Board now works, and I do not know where you will find your Justice of the Peace available for all that will be required of him. I venture to put this question, because it is one of several points in the Bill on which I find it rather difficult to arrive at any certain conclusion. The Bill has no Memorandum, and there are no side references; and if the right hon. Gentleman can, before the Bill goes into Committee, supply these, he will assist many of us in arriving at an exact conclusion as to what is meant.

As an illustration of the difficulty —under Section 15 County Councils have authority to maintain main roads; but under Sub-section 2 the Urban Authority "may claim to retain their powers of maintaining main roads." Is it intended that the Vestries and District Boards shall claim power to maintain the main roads as Urban Authorities? That is a difficulty, and I confess I have no means of ascertaining with certainty the intention of the Bill in this respect. I will give another illustration—under Section 37 the City Common Council may claim to "retain" the powers and duties of maintaining and repairing any main road in the City. I point out with regard to that, that they have not this power now, and therefore, if they are to retain it, it must mean that they are to obtain it. The power is now in the hands of the Commissioners of Sewers, and the Common Council has no power in this matter, except in the appointment of the Commission once a-year. This, as well as the matters I have just mentioned, will show that there is absolute inconsistency with regard to certain points. Now I return to the constitution of the London Body.

The selected councillors will be called aldermen, whether you like it or not. It is not probable that people will assume the longer title; they will be aldermen if they are anything, and the first point I wish to make is, that to give us aldermen by a system of triennial election in London is a retrograde policy. The aldermen we have are all of them subject to direct election. It is true that they are aldermen for life; they have been so elected for hundreds of years; but still they are directly elected. It is not long since one succeeded in an election with 121 votes and another with 163 votes; but still there is direct election. Besides, these aldermen at present have some connection with the wards; we make aldermen practically chairmen of our wards in the City; they represent some interests, but here you give aldermen the representation of nothing. They are like Bishops *in partibus*, without sees to visit, and we say that with regard to the London Council you should not take this retrograde step. I understand that the hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) says that "These must be dropped in London." I am glad to be able to agree with him. Further, I do not think that we shall be able to persuade our best citizens to accept the title at all, and I therefore hope that we shall be relieved from them as far as London is concerned. There is, of course, the danger of some of the elections turning on political grounds. In Liverpool and Leeds they have, I believe, turned on those grounds, but I hope they will not in future do so here. The adoption of selected councillors might lead to a misrepresentation in the Council of the majority of the electors, and now that you are starting *de novo* this in itself is an objection to the proposal. We have the idea that whatever exists can be defended upon some original principle if we can only find it out. And so you have attached to the constitution of this body a number of aldermen.

As a matter of fact, aldermen under the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 have no foundation in principle at all. Lord John Russell, when he introduced the Bill on the 5th of June in that year, said—"We propose that there should be one body only, the Mayor and Common Council." When the Bill reached the House of Lords, Lord Lyndhurst moved an Amendment that one-fourth of the Council should be aldermen for life. Lord Brougham said he viewed such a proposal with "aversion and disgust," that it was inconsistent with the principles of the measure, and that the usefulness of the measure would be paralyzed by the "baneful self-elective provision." But it remained for Lord Wharncliffe to give the true reasons for the Amendment, when he said that a portion of the Council ought to be rendered "independent of the people;" that the—

> "Principle of aristocracy was at stake, for if it were determined that a body of aldermen were unnecessary to a Corporation, then here-

ditary Members in the House of Lords would be deemed equally unnecessary."

Lord Ellenborough supported it for the earlier operation of the measure in order "to counteract the turbulence inseparable from the novelty of the system." We know that then there was a conflict between the two Houses of Parliament, and that strong language was used, much stronger than now, with reference to the House of Lords, one Member of the lower House, Sir Samuel Whalley, suggesting that there should be written over the portals of the House of Lords—"Mangling done here." When the Lords' Amendments were considered in the Commons, Sir Robert Peel said he did not consider the introduction of aldermen as councillors an improvement to the Bill, that the selection of a certain number of aldermen as councillors "would imply distrust without carrying security," and that they would be forced in without the consent of the community. Lord John Russell said that it was quite incompatible with the Bill, and would only tend "to embarrass, disturb, and weaken the action of the Municipal Body." Eventually a compromise was arrived at of election for six years—one-half retiring every third year. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to omit this provision for selected members from the Bill.

With respect to the Sheriffs, it is proposed to give the Queen the power to appoint a new Sheriff of London. I suggest that this power might very well be given to the Council of London. It is a power possessed by the Common Council of counties of cities, and I think we may very properly give it to the London Council. The present Sheriff of Middlesex is really two gentlemen rolled into one. The Liveries of the City Guilds elect once a-year two Sheriffs who become Sheriffs of London, and they together make the Sheriff of Middlesex. Therefore, this is a proposal to take away from the Companies of the City of London their right of electing a Sheriff of Middlesex—it is taking away a municipal right, and thus you may, so to speak, be beginning to let out water. Will the City rebel? They have already stated that the Sheriff-wick of Middlesex, paid for and enjoyed for 700 years, "will not be parted with tamely;" but I think that when the turtle is turned on its back it is not able to fight very hard. The Commissioners of 1854 suggested that the Sheriff should be appointed by the Common Council, and I think the Sheriff of London might be appointed by the County Council.

With regard to the Recorder. Under the 38th section, Sub-section 12, the powers and duties of Recorder and Common Serjeant of London are unaltered, but Section 23 provides for the payment out of the county fund of part of the salaries of "officers" of the Central Criminal Court. Now is it intended to pay any part of the salary of the Recorder or Common Serjeant, because if so it amounts to a proposal to relieve a present charge on the City funds, which again is something in the nature of the letting out of water, because it involves certain important principles. If the City estate is to be relieved at our expense, we have some questions to ask as to that estate.

With regard to the Court of Aldermen, I understand that certain administrative functions, not including licensing, are transferred to the Common Council of the City. I ask why should they not be extended to the London Council? But the magisterial functions of the City aldermen are left untouched. Why is that? The aldermen are a body of men exercising magisterial functions in the centre of the business of the world, without the slightest guarantee of legal knowledge or capacity for dealing with the questions which come before them. Two aldermen might, by the Central Criminal Court Act, try a man for murder, and one of them, in order to make a Court, always sits with the Judge; and when in 1854 it was proposed to abolish this right of the aldermen, they said it was a revolutionary proposal, and that they recognized the advantages they enjoyed in sitting with the Judges—as if the Court was a sort of university for the purpose of completing the education of City tradesmen.

With regard to the question of audit. The County Councils' accounts are to be audited by auditors appointed by the Local Government Board. Will the effect of the Bill be to continue the Treasury audit for London, which now attaches to the Metropolitan Board of Works? Because if so, I simply say that we should prefer to have no connection with the

Treasury and to be placed on a level with other counties.

With respect to borrowing powers, other Councils may borrow with the consent of the Local Government Board. But this Bill seems to fix us with the borrowing powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works under the Act of 1869, which, as the House knows, makes it necessary for them to come every year to the House of Commons to make application for the money they want. I say this is an indignity. We want to have the County Council of London trusted to look after the funds of the inhabitants of London as is the case with County Councils in other parts of the country.

I do not find any power to promote Bills in Parliament and to promote schemes. I think such power should be given. The Metropolitan Board of Works sometimes comes to this House to be relieved from the cost put upon it in opposing Bills in Parliament; it has also endeavoured to introduce Bills on several occasions, and I apprehend that the new authority may very well have power to do so. I think they should have power, if I may venture to suggest it, to introduce Bills, or at all events to prepare schemes on certain subjects, such as, for instance, lighting.

I have looked into the Bill with the view of seeing whether, having regard to our extreme anxiety to pass it, other functions could not be given to the proposed new Authority without interfering with the scope of the Bill or needlessly adding to its extent. I have come to the conclusion that there are two or three functions which the right hon. Gentleman might very well give to the London Council without interfering with the scope or object of the Bill, and which, I believe, will pass without any opposition whatever.

First, with regard to hackney carriages. These in London have been licensed since the reign of Charles II., when the tax was devoted to making roads, and afterwards in the time of William and Mary to paying off the French War Tax. This tax brings in £31,000 a-year, and is now paid into the police account. The regulations are under eight Acts of Parliament from 1831 to 1869, and of which it would not be untrue to say that a more arbitrary and unpractical body of laws are not to be found on our Statute Book. I say that the Council might very well have power to make regulations and have transferred to it this £31,000 a-year, while the police might well retain certain functions with regard to intoxication, furious driving, assaults, and matters of that kind.

With regard to markets. In 1882 I carried a clause in the Metropolitan Board of Works Bill, giving to the Board power to deal with markets. That power, unfortunately, lasted for a year only, and the consequence was that the Metropolitan Board of Works, after its own special manner, set to work to consider it; it was found that every Member wanted to have a market in his own district, and nothing was done. I submit that this power should be given in the Bill. Of course we know that the City Corporation under a Statute as old as the time of Edward III. claims to prevent the establishment of any market "*infra septem leucas in circuitu civitatis;*" but markets are important things to provide for the people, and I suggest that this power should be given to the Council.

My third point is the water supply. In 1880 there was a Select Committee, of which Lord Cross was a Member, and they said in their Report that "in the absence of any single Municipal Body in London" they would suggest the establishment of a Water Authority. Here we have the very Body which the Committee proposed to establish. The Metropolitan Board of Works introduced Bills in 1872 and 1878 with respect to purchase and new supply. The simple reason why the House of Commons did not give them the power to initiate a new supply of water was because they had no confidence in the Board; and by a Return which I moved for three years ago, to show the loss which had occurred since those Bills were introduced, it appears that the citizens of London have lost something like £10,000,000 in consequence of not having control over their water supply.

The next suggestion of powers to be given to the London Council is with regard to the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The Metropolitan Asylums Board is a Poor Law authority in theory, but a Sanitary Board in reality.

I suggest that the functions of this Board should be taken over by the London Council, together with other sanitary powers. Look at the absurdity of the present condition of things.

There is to be power in the Central Authority under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts of 1878 and 1886, to prevent the spread of contagious diseases among animals, but it has no power to stamp out and prevent the spread of infection among the people. We have 40 independent sanitary authorities in London; we have no means of combining, and no unity of action, and this the Local Government Board have themselves found out. Some of these authorities have not put the 35th section of the Sanitary Act of 1866 in force, and the Local Government Board have issued rules to have it enforced; but they have no power to make the Vestries carry out the Act. I suggest then that the London Council should lay down principles and frame bye-laws in sanitary matters, and also in respect of mortuaries, baths, and washhouses. When our Bill of 1884 was before the House in July, 1884, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said "It was, in point of fact, impossible that they could treat London as a whole." That is, of course, altered, because he now tells us that it is possible. He then said—

> "The Government themselves acknowledge the difficulties in the case by not conferring on the Board many of the powers which it was hoped by those who were mainly instrumental in raising the question, would be vested in a new Municipality. . . . . It appeared to him that if this new Council were to be entrusted with anything at all, it might fairly be entrusted with the powers now possessed by the Metropolitan Asylums Board."—(3 *Hansard*, [289] 1951-2.)

I think this meets the case of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and I think it is right to take over their powers, and ultimately for the London Council to take over the Poor Law control? I think that Poor Law control and the Guardians might very well be ultimately given to the Council, and the Lambeth Guardians are already anxious that this should be done. I have now referred to the four matters which can be transferred without friction, and practically without opposition, on which the judgment of the House has already been passed, and the transfer of which will be of great benefit to us, that is to say, markets, water supply, hackney carriages, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

Now, with respect to the future, I confess I am satisfied with the Bill—the possibilities of the future are illimitable. The 8th section is beyond all doubt, in my judgment, the best in the Bill; I suppose it is the most decentralizing section ever framed in any Bill ever brought before this House. But I have just one suggestion to make upon it. It is stated that the Authorities there mentioned may, if they consent, have their functions transferred. I think there should be consent also on the part of the receiving Council.

There is power given to Conservators to transfer their functions to the County Authority. Now we are anxious to have control over the Thames Conservancy; but I do not see, owing to the diverse elements of its constitution, how this is to be worked out. The Board consists of 23 members, the Lord Mayor, two aldermen, four common councilmen, the deputy master of the Trinity House, two members nominated by the Lord High Admiral, one by the Privy Council, one by the Trinity House, two by registered shipowners, two by owners of lighters and steam-tugs, one by steam-shipowners, one by dockowners and wharfingers, one by the Board of Trade, and four by riparian owners. Their control extends from Yantlet Creek, in Kent, to Cricklade, in Wiltshire. I do not see how we are to carry out this arrangement, and I throw the problem before the right hon. Gentleman for his consideration.

There is one other point under Clause 8 to which I desire to call attention. I understand that the Home Office may give us the control of the Police; but under Section 91 the Police in London are for the present to remain as they are. No doubt Amendments will be moved on that point, because there are some matters in connection with the police which have been pressed upon the attention of the Government. At present the Police jurisdiction of the Metropolis extends, roughly, to 700 square miles. The Metropolis Local Government Committee of 1867 were in favour of relegating the control to the outside counties; why, then, should this not be done? In the counties outside London there are 580 square miles over which they have control, and I venture to say there is no reasonable ground on which that anomaly can be defended.

What is the principle in this Home Office control? There is no principle to be found.

If you go back to the introduction of the measure of 1829 you will find that Sir Robert Peel proposed, not with respect to the City, but with respect to the London parishes, that two or three should be joined together in order to secure joint action on the part of the police. In those days there were only six policemen in Kensington; if a man escaped over the border into the next parish, it was uncertain whether he could be captured, and it was, therefore, for unity that the control of the Home Office was given. But the first point I make is, that there is no ground for the continuance of the control of the Home Office over the police in the counties around London.

Now we are to pay the whole cost, and taking the last Returns, which are for the year 1886, I find for the whole police area that £713,000 was paid in rates; the City police cost £110,000 in addition; the grant from the Government of 4*d.* per pound of rateable value of the whole area on £33,219,000, was £559,000. Taking the rateable value of London which was approximately £30,000,000, the amount of the grant to London proper amounts to £500,000.

I wish to put, if I may, a very important question to the right hon. Gentleman affecting London. As I understand the proposal there will be allocated to the London County certain matters of income which may be taken to balance the £500,000 a-year which is the police subvention. Is the £500,000 which is to be given to the London County Council to be used by that Council for the benefit of the City of London as well as the Metropolis? Because if so it amounts to giving the City of London the very large sum of £40,000 or £50,000, inasmuch as the City of London does not now receive any of the £500,000. If the City is to receive any of the money given in exchange, we shall oppose it in Committee, or else raise some difficult question with respect to City property, which question I think might be very well kept out of the discussion on this Bill.

The Bill still leaves two police forces. Attempts were made in 1839 and 1863 to amalgamate these forces, but the methods adopted by the City in order to prevent amalgamation were almost as bad as those which they adopted against our Bill in 1884. Those methods were wrong, but their proposition was right, which was to keep in the hands of the people the control of their police. Lord John Russell said, that the control of the police ought to be in the hands of those who are responsible for the peace of the town.

We have in London 14,000 men who are absolutely out of our control; they are placed in the hands of a military commander who has not the advantage of knowing the London people. Colonel Henderson did know the London people, and he believed in them with a faith almost touching in its extent. The present Commissioner, Sir Charles Warren, does not understand them at all. He appears to be in a condition of nervous prostration, talks about 50,000 persons who are a danger to London and so forth. But what is more important to consider is the serious difficulty that the people themselves have not confidence in the police force. Supposing that the circumstances which occurred on the 20th November had occurred in any Provincial or Scotch town, what would have taken place? Beyond all doubt there would have been an inquiry. There were on that day many cases of men attacked by the police, but there was no inquiry. Things in this respect are getting worse, because we are now having—with regard to London—what has happened in Ireland—police versions of what takes place. I was in Cork, and a sad story was told me with regard to the want of control of the police in Ireland and its result. My hon. Friend the Member for Northwich (Mr. Brunner) and some friends were talking together in a corner of a room at our hotel; a gentleman spoke to me, and said—"If you want to see how the police system in Cork works go outside. There are men who have been listening for two hours to what Mr. Brunner and his friends have been saying." We went out, and saw three men of the Constabulary force with their heads close together listening at the window. If there had been control of the police force in Cork that could not have happened. We have had the police version of the affair at Mitchelstown, which is a perfect burlesquerie of what we found to be the case when we were there. We do not want that sort of thing in London. But the London police levy—as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine)—blackmail on a most unfortunate class in London. The London police levy blackmail on the great distributors of goods in London—["No, no!"] An hon. Member says "No," but I inform him that one of the very largest distributors of goods in London told me last week that it was a question of the money being paid whether his firm was summoned or not.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The hon. and learned Gentleman is making such a grave accusation against a body of men in London, that I think he ought to state the name of his informant.

MR. FIRTH: My informant is one of half-a-dozen of the largest distributors of goods in London. I am not going to state the name in this House. If the right hon. Gentleman wishes for the name, I will give it in private.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker. A most serious charge has been made against the London police. The matter is one which concerns the public, and it is in the public interest that we should have the name of the person who makes a charge of that kind.

MR. FIRTH: The charge is not, of course, against the police as a body. I am not going to give the name in this House—[*Cries of* "Withdraw!" and "Name!"]—I shall not—I will give it to the right hon. Gentleman. He will recognize the name as one of the largest distributors of goods in London.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman will understand that I am not seeking the information for the sake of interrupting him, but simply in the discharge of what I consider to be a public duty. If the name is given, it must be under conditions which will enable me to test the accuracy of the statement.

MR. FIRTH: That is so; but it must be understood that I am not charging the whole body of the London police. The London police contain as large a proportion of the very best men as are to be found in any force in the Kingdom. What I say is, that they are deteriorating, and I gave an illustration of their operations. The final question I have to ask is, why we should not in London have the same control over our police which other towns have? I think our London Council is a body to which that control may be fairly entrusted, and we must have the question argued out.

I have no objection to make to the proposals of the Bill as to licensing, except so far as they affect the whole country; but I certainly was astonished at the view of the law which the hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) put before the House the other night, and as he said that the Temperance Party, in a publication in which I have taken no part, had wrongly stated the decision of Mr. Justice Field, I will read it now. He said—

> "The learned counsel for the appellant pointed out that in the prior Act the Legislature had drawn a great distinction between new licences and licences by way of renewal. They have done so in one respect. The Legislature have said that when an applicant comes for a licence in respect of a house not previously licensed, his neighbours ought to know of it and have an opportunity of opposing his application, and, therefore, notices on the church doors, and notices of objection are prescribed to protect the justices in the exercise of their jurisdiction as to granting licences. But when a man has once gone through that ordeal and the justices have granted a certificate, he obtains another certificate by way of renewal as a man occupying those particular premises, and, subject to a careful provision, he need not attend in person unless required, and may assume that the certificate will be granted as before: 35 and 36 Vict., c. 94, s. 42; 37 and 38 Vict., c. 49, s. 26. As to the distinction between new licences and licences granted by way of renewal, every licence is a new licence, although granted to a man who has had one before, for it is only granted for one year. If the Legislature intended the enactment in question only to apply to a certificate by way of renewal, why did not they say 'any licence other than by way of renewal?' They have not done so. The generality of the language used points clearly to the conclusion that the Legislature meant to vest the absolute discretion in the justices."

Mr. Justice Stephen said—

> "I am of the same opinion. It seems to me clear that this Act was intended to give to licensing justices an absolute power, and that they can either refuse or confirm these certificates on any ground they like, and whether the application is for a new certificate, or is made for the twentieth time, and whether the applicant is of unblemished character, as in the present case, or of bad character."

If that is the law, why should we not leave the publicans to the law? If the law is that they are entitled to compensation, leave them to it; but if it happens not to be the law, then by this

Bill you are endowing the publicans with millions upon millions sterling, and that, I say, is a proposal extremely dangerous and unjust. I venture to make a suggestion to Her Majesty's Government as to the way they may deal with this question and get out of the difficulty with regard to licensing. I have found, when difficult social and political problems have had to be solved, that it was wise to see what had been done in similar cases elsewhere.

In the United States of America they have tried to deal with the Drink Question in every possible way. When a State legislated for the whole State the legislation has generally failed because particular localities were not in favour of State legislation; but when the question was left to be decided by each county it was found that the local system worked very well. Now, I have examined the reports from 12 States of the American Union as to how the system of leaving the decision to the counties has worked, and from the unanimous judgment of the Senators I must say that it has worked well.

I think, then, that in the matter of licensing every county ought to have the right to deal with it as it thinks best. That principle you have accepted in respect of Sunday Closing; why, then, do you not go further and give to the counties this power also? In Omaha there is a population of 125,000: the amount of the Licence Tax under a system of high licensing is $250,000, and this sum of about £50,000 sterling which is brought in goes in aid of education.

Having now occupied the time of the House at sufficient length, I have only to repeat that we are extremely thankful for this Bill even as it has been introduced. As time goes on, I believe it will be shown that the County Council to be constituted for London will prove itself worthy of its position. I think that enlarged powers will be given to it. No Body ever started upon its municipal career with so extended a series of important functions as this Body will have to discharge. It will have a debt of £25,000,000, of which £17,000,000 will be its own liability. It will have the expenditure of an enormous income; it will have to control the whole main drainage system, and it will have an opportunity of solving the difficult problem of the disposal of sewage; it will have the control of parks and open spaces in London, of the Fire Brigade, and of the River Thames, and I think, as time goes on, the London Council will enlist the confidence of the inhabitants of London and of Parliament, and prove itself, by its character, a credit to the right hon. Gentleman who created it, and by its action an honour to the greatest City in the world.

MR. ELTON (Somerset, Wellington) said, he took it that, as regarded the general principle of the Bill, the country agreed that county districts should be municipalized according to the pattern of the Municipal Corporation Acts of 1834 and 1882, and that the blessings of municipal life should be extended to the whole country. Let them, then, not attempt, while carrying out that principle, to combine with it at the same time alterations and improvements in every little detail of the existing municipal pattern as they went along, otherwise they would get into trouble, drift into hopeless confusion, and perhaps never get to the end of their task. Let them not try to do at once two things that were incompatible, but stick to the municipal principle. He suggested that it might be better to make grants for poor relief on the basis of an average of the grants made by the Guardians during the past five years, and not, as proposed, according to the number of indoor paupers, as such a method might discourage outdoor relief, and compel people to go into the workhouse. He proceeded to give examples of the hardships which might ensue if the Government proposals were accepted, and advised their withdrawal. With regard to the police, the boroughs under the Bill would lose a certain amount of control over that force, and they would hardly stand having the control entirely taken away and given wholly to Quarter Sessions. There was another alternative in regard to the police—namely, vesting the control over it in the Executive Government. That might be a system suitable to the Metropolitan area, but the counties did not want to have their police managed and controlled by the Executive Government.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, he desired to refer to a speech delivered from the Treasury Bench by the hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), and in which the legal right of the publicans to compensation was distinctly laid down. It was stated that they had at law a vested interest in their licences. Such a proposition had never been recognized in any Court of Law, and was not to be found in any Act of Parliament, and its consequences, if established, would be most far-reaching upon this system of county government and upon the temperance question as a whole. The hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine) had calculated that the average value of a licence throughout England and Wales was £2,000. Taking the average value at half that sum—namely, £1,000—and the number of public-houses in the country at 180,000, the value of the licences would amount to the enormous sum of £180,000,000. Such was the value of the vested interest which it was proposed to create by this Bill, for it certainly did not exist at present. When the Bill was brought in to deal with the Irish land question, what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain)? Something very different to what he had said in regard to this proposal to give compensation to the publicans; and by comparing these two statements a fair estimate was obtained of the value of the right hon. Gentleman's opinion. The hon. and learned Solicitor General also referred to the moral right of the publicans to compensation. Into that he would not enter. It might be that the publicans had a moral claim to consideration; but that was very different to having a legal right to compensation. In the one case it might be deemed fair to make them some compensation or allowance; in the other, they would be entitled to the full value of their licences. Reference had been made to poor men being deprived of their property; but it ought to be borne in mind that the great bulk of the public-houses throughout the country did not belong to the publicans who occupied them; they belonged to the great capitalists, the brewers and distillers, and it was really, in the main, in their interest that this proposal for compensation was brought forward, and pressure had been brought to bear upon the Government to induce them to impose a legal right which did not exist and had never been recognized. There were three classes of licences. The first consisted of what were called on-licences, which were in existence before the Act of 1869—licences for selling beer alone, and which by virtue of that Act became entitled to renewal except upon four specific grounds. Then came certain off-licences, in respect of which there was a free and unfettered discretion; and although the Act of 1882, known as Ritchie's Act, declared them to be in the free and unqualified discretion of the Licensing Justices, it was proposed by this Bill to give compensation for the non-renewal of them. The great bulk of the licences that they had in view were the regular full public-house licences for the sale of beer and spirits; and the hon. and learned Solicitor General had endeavoured to show that there was a right of renewal except for personal misconduct. The law with reference to them began in 1828. By the Act of that year the Licensing Justices received absolutely free discretion to grant or refuse a licence, or the renewal of a licence; and that applied to spirits as well as beer. In 1830 the era of Free Trade in beer set in. From 1830 to 1869 persons obtained licences for selling beer as readily as gentlemen did for keeping horses. In 1869 a change came, and the discretion of the Justices granted in 1828 was restored, subject to the exceptions he had mentioned. It would not have been possible to maintain that there was a vested interest in the renewal of licences if it had not been for some things in the Acts of 1872 and 1874. It was enacted in 1828 that holders who wished for the renewal of their licences should attend the Sessions in person; they could not attend by attorney; and the Courts were, therefore, crowded, and other business was interfered with. To avoid this inconvenience it was enacted in 1872 that the Justices should not entertain objections to a renewal, or take evidence with respect to it, unless notice of opposition had been given, and that the holder need not attend unless he had received notice to do so, provided always that on an objection being made the Justices might adjourn the case and require the attendance of the holder. This was perfectly fair; otherwise an objection might have been heard in the absence of the publican. The sole object of the provisions was to dispense with the personal attendance of the publican unless objection were made to the renewal, but the Act went further and said that "subject as aforesaid"—that was, to the requisition to attend and to the notice of objection—

> "The licence shall be renewed and the powers and discretion of the Justices relating to such renewal shall be exercised as heretofore."

To appeal to these words as recognizing a vested interest only showed the weakness of the claim. After 1872 it was found that Justices in some parts of the country issued circulars requiring attendance to facilitate the issuing of the licences and the payment of fees, and in some cases for giving a little salutary advice. But this was found to produce inconvenience, and in 1874 it was enacted that a request for attendance should not be made save for some special cause personal to the licence-holder. This meant that licence-holders were not to be summoned by general circular, and that they should be required to attend if there were objections which might lead to refusal. Of course a licence would be renewed if a man was not required to attend—that is, he must have an opportunity of being heard before the renewal was refused. But the hon. and learned Solicitor General argued something very different from that, for he said that because a man could not be required to attend save for some special cause personal to himself, the licence must be renewed except for some special cause. It was torturing the words to put upon them this interpretation. The Act of 1869 specified four conditions, the violation of which was to involve refusal of renewal; and if Parliament had intended to grant a vested interest except for personal misconduct, it would have had no difficulty in expressing its intentions. The issue had not been raised in the Courts except in the Over Darwen case; but there were some *obiter dicta* of Judges that were important. Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, in a case which came before him in May, 1878, dealt at some length with this question, and came to the conclusion that the Justices had the same discretion to refuse a renewal as they had to refuse a new licence. In 1876, Mr. Justice Lush said that the Act only required the licencee to attend if something personal to himself was to be brought up. But that would not take away the discretion of the Justices to refuse to renew his licence on other grounds when he attended. The question was about to be solved by a case which was now before Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Wills in the Queen's Bench Division, in which the Justices of Westmoreland had refused renewal on the ground that there was no necessity for the house. He ventured to prophesy that the decision would be conclusive in abolishing the argument that there was a vested right for renewal of existing licences. The hon. and learned Solicitor General rested his case solely on these two Acts of Parliament; and even supposing he was right in his view of the law, why was it to be altered from the condition in which it now was? If the hon. and learned Solicitor General were right, and the County Councils refused to renew a licence, then they could be compelled to do so by a Court of Law. If the Government had this supreme faith in a vested interest, why did they think it necessary to protect it by a new clause? The very fact that the Government were endeavouring to protect this vested interest by a special clause was the best proof that they had no confidenee in it. If they were going to transfer to the County Councils the power to deal with licences—and the lawyers in the House differed as to the extent of the publican's vested interest—why should the House decide between them? Of all Assemblages this was the least competent to deal with questions of law. Why should Parliament not leave the matter to the Courts of Law? Then when the time came, and the County Councils refused to renew licences, the holders could go to the Courts of Law for redress. He did not suggest that they should impair or diminish the rights of the publicans, whatever they might be; but he asked the House not to interfere with the rights of the public authority, whatever they might be, to deal with licences.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman forgot that, so far as this matter was concerned, the magistrates and Quarter Sessions would cease to operate at all, and that the power created by this Bill was not a judicial tribunal, but a representative and executive body.

MR. R. T. REID said, his point was was that the Court of Quarter Sessions was a judicial tribunal; and the hon. and learned Solicitor General's argument, if it meant anything, was that it was an administrative tribunal and had no discretion.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said, his contention was that the Justices could not refuse to renew a licence unless the man had been summoned to appear before them, and that they only had power to require him to come before them on a cause personal to himself.

MR. R. T. REID said, he was glad to find that they were all agreed on the subject. Under the stress of discussion, the hon. and learned Solicitor General did not rise and say they had a vested right to renewal unless the man has been required to attend, and that he could not be required to attend except for a cause personal to himself. That was very different from saying that they had no right to renew. But he would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, or anyone for the Government, to answer this question. Suppose a man had been notified and attended, and, being there, the Court said to him—"Now, Sir, we have you here. We think there are too many licensed houses in your neighbourhood, and we shall not renew your licence." Would the hon. and learned Gentleman, if they did, say that any Court in the Kingdom would interfere?

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said, he thought they would.

MR. R. T. REID said, if that were so, surely the hon. and learned Gentleman was arguing in a circle; and what a splendid and ample protection these people had! If that were the case, there was a Court in the Kingdom that would compel the Sessions to renew the licence, and the same Court would have jurisdiction to compel the County Councils to do the same.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: No.

MR. R. T. REID asked, why not?

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said, that the Courts now interfered with the discretion of a judicial tribunal, but an executive tribunal was to be set up in its place with which the Courts would not interfere.

MR. R. T. REID said, that if the High Court now compelled a judicial tribunal to renew licences, it would also compel an executive body. He did not think that this country, if once awakened to the fact that the magistrates were not compelled to renew licences, as the judgment of the Queen's Bench would shortly show, would tamely submit to have saddled upon it the compensation for vested interests which for 60 years had been successfully resisted in the House. Even if the question were doubtful as to the renewal, yet a body of opinion would grow up stronger and stronger every day in opposition to giving the publicans, brewers, and distillers anything more than in law they now had. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham had commented upon the fact that £300,000 a-year to be derived from the licences was to be handed over to the County Councils, and said that would be for the purpose of dealing with the licensed houses. That sum was perfectly inadequate for purposes of compensation, as to his knowledge it was not enough to buy 12 houses in London that he could point out. Then it was pretty certain that the County Councils would abolish Sunday trading, with the result that the value of the licences would be reduced by 14 per cent. But the County Councils would only be able to add 20 per cent. to the price of these licences, and as 14 per cent would be taken off in consequence of the abolition of Sunday trading only 6 per cent would really be added. Thus, instead of £300,000 a-year, the sum available for compensation would only be £80,000. He asked the House whether it was really prepared to pass these Licensing Clauses which would impose almost limitless liabilities on the future ratepayers of the country. By passing these provisions they would erect an insurmountable wall in the way of temperance reform, for there would be no diminution whatever in the present enormous number of public-houses. Whenever a County Council might desire to refuse the renewal of licences, preposterous claims for compensation would be put forward which would render refusal impossible. To agree to the plan of the Government would be to postpone indefinitely the success of the great efforts that were being made to check the drink evil in this country.

MR. A. W. HALL (Oxford) said, he did not wish to follow the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) through the thorny paths of the licensing question; but he would just remark with regard to the strong point which the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think he had made when he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) to declare why the existing state of things which compelled the Courts to grant licences should remain in the Bill, that the reason was that the Licence Clauses of the measure were going to alter the law, and that these Licence Clauses were really a concession to Local Option—a reasonable and fair concession to that principle of Local Option. The question he (Mr. A. W. Hall) should like to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman was this—did he really want to reduce the number of licences, or did he only want to harass the publicans, the brewers, and the distillers? If his object was to reduce the number of licences, he (Mr. A. W. Hall) ventured very respectfully to say to him that the shortest cut to that end was to grant publicans the reasonable and moderate amount of compensation which the Government proposed, because the County Councils would not consist exclusively of members of the Temperance Party. So far as the majority of the members of the Councils were concerned, they would be just and honest men, who would hesitate to confiscate the property of publicans, which was sometimes of enormous value—of such value that these extra licences would not suffice to pay for them, unless some arrangement for reasonable compensation were made. Now, he desired to turn to a very different subject indeed, and that was to a point in this Bill which he wanted to ask the Government to give candid attention to with a view to some alteration being made. He alluded to the grant in aid of indoor pauperism, which had already been alluded to, and to the representations in regard to which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) was prepared to give favourable consideration as far as making an alteration was concerned. The proposal in the Bill to which he referred was one to which he took the greatest possible exception, and for several reasons, principally because the Government had officially told them that it was impossible to include the Poor Law in this new Bill, and that if it was attempted to include it they would be unduly overweighting it and jeopardising its chance of passing into law. Well, he (Mr. A. W. Hall) regretted very much that this was so; but he did not question the wisdom of the decision of the Government not to overweight the Bill by including the question of the Poor Law, but he questioned the wisdom of the proposal which said, at one and the same time—"We will not include the Poor Law in the Bill, and yet we will include the most important part of the Poor Law—namely, the question of indoor relief." He was one of those who should like very much to see this question dealt with on a good broad basis, and he was sorry that an opportunity, which he could not help thinking was a golden opportunity, had not been taken advantage of for that purpose; for he thought it was only right that the people who take so deep an interest as the working people did in this question of indoor and outdoor relief should have something to say in the administration of the Poor Law by allowing them to have a direct voice in the matter through representatives elected directly by them. The hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Courtney), whom he did not now see in his place, in the very able speech he delivered the other night, seemed to feel some apprehension in regard to the matter being left to the County Councils, although the hon. Gentleman seemed to recognize that sooner or later it would have to be left to the County Councils. But so far as he (Mr. A. W. Hall) gathered from the hon. Gentleman, he seemed to think that if the matter were left to them there would be very great danger of its being abused. Well, he confessed that he did not in any degree share the hon. Gentleman's anxiety. He believed that the County Councils would have performed their duties in this respect thoroughly well and with thorough efficiency. But even if he had shared that anxiety, he would venture to say that it was too late for this theory. They had adopted the policy of trusting the people, and in all matters of Local Government they would have to hand over to the people, without any reservation whatever, the matters connected with Local Government vitally affecting their interests. No matter much more vitally affected the interests of the people than this matter of the administration of the Poor Law, and it would be quite impossible for them to continue to confine the administration of the Poor Law to the Boards at present elected or to the Local Government Board itself. It had been said, and truly said he thought, that there was no form of administration in the world more centralized than that of the English Poor Law. They had the principles to guide them laid down by Parliament in the several Acts, particularly in the Act of 1834; but the Local Government Board by their orders regulated every single act of the Guardians, and by their Inspectors and by their auditors, one might say, supervized every single act of the Guardians. Well, that might be all very right, but it was not true local government, such as they were trying to establish by this Bill; and therefore it was that he said he was so sorry that this opportunity should be lost, though probably it could not be avoided, of dealing with this matter, because they had no uniformity of procedure such as they might expect from the fresh and less centralized administration of the Poor Law. He held that there was constant pressure going on from the Central Department on Boards of Guardians to administer the Poor Law in a more and more doctrinaire spirit. Some Boards of Guardians yielded to that pressure, and some did not. Those who yielded to it did it by forcing the people into the workhouse at the expense of outdoor relief; but others did not do it, and went on granting their outdoor relief to the poor. It was a serious hardship, and he thought it ought not to continue to be the case, that two people might be living within a stone's throw of each other, though in different Unions, and yet might be subject to an entirely different system of Poor Law relief, instead of being subject, as they ought to be subject, to the same system of Poor Law relief. He believed if the administration of the Poor Law were in the hands of the County Councils there would be far more uniformity of administration than there was under the present centralized system. Then they got matters made worse, instead of better, by the action of the Government in the present Bill. The Government stepped in and proposed a capitation grant of 4*d.* for indoor paupers, thereby giving every Board of Guardians a distinct interest in making as many indoor paupers as they possibly could. Well, what would be the result of that? It would act as a stimulant; it would necessarily act as a stimulant to Guardians to increase the number of indoor poor at the expense of the outdoor poor. That was perfectly certain. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said the other night, in answer to a similar objection, that he did not think Boards of Guardians would "scramble," as he said, for these fourpences, and he did not seem to think the suggestion reasonable, as he did not believe it very likely that Boards of Guardians would try to win this Government grant of 2*s.* 4*d.* when in order to do so they would have to incur an expense of 6*s.* 4*d.* or 6*s.* 8*d.* for indoor paupers. He thought that was not the way to put it. A destitute man came for relief to the Board of Guardians, and had to be relieved, either indoors or outdoors; which should it be? Under present circumstances there was a large doctrinaire minority on the Boards wishing to put every man into the workhouse; but the great body of the Guardians were apt to say, "It is more expensive to us to do that, and we should lose 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week per head, and we will therefore give him outdoor relief, seeing that he is not an able-bodied man, but an aged or sick person." Then comes in this terrible proposition of 2*s.* 4*d.*, just putting the balance on the wrong side against the poor man. He (Mr. A. W. Hall), therefore, earnestly hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would consider that question, and would not tell him—as he was afraid he would—that the Guardians were not really going to scramble for these fourpences. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman that it was not merely a matter of opinion or hypotheses—it was a matter capable of proof. Under the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1870 something took place. The area of chargeability was made different for the first time in the history of English Poor Law for the indoor and outdoor poor. The difference was that the outdoor poor remained as a burden on the Union itself, while the burden of the indoor poor was made a charge over the whole Metropolitan area. What was the consequence of that? Why, that it became the direct interest of the Boards of Guardians to give as little outdoor relief as they possibly could, and put as many paupers as possible into the workhouse. Did they or did they not scramble for these fourpences? There was no doubt they did. He would give the House some figures that would prove they did. In 1872, before the Poor Act to which he was alluding came into full operation, the number of outdoor poor in the Metropolis in the first week of December, 1872, was 72,923, but in the corresponding week of last year that number had decreased to 43,460, or by 41 per cent, though the general population had increased 30 per cent. Did the indoor paupers increase in numbers or did they not? They did so largely, for whilst in the first week of December, 1872, the number of indoor paupers in the Metropolis was 35,383, in the corresponding week of 1887 these indoor paupers had increased to 59,099, or 69 per cent. The outdoor poor had decreased by 29,400, which at a cost of 3*s.* a-head, would be a saving to the rates of £4,000; but the indoor paupers had increased by 23,517, which at 6*s.* 8*d.* a-head, which he thought was the reckoning of the Local Government Board, would be £7,900 added to the rates. Therefore, by this scrambling for the fourpences, the Guardians had not gained as they expected, but had lost a considerable sum. Well, even if they had gained, which there could not be the slightest doubt they intended to do, and which this subvention on the part of the Government would make other Guardians in the country districts endeavour to do, such a thing ought not to have been allowed. Each case, he submitted, ought to be decided on its merits, and the Guardians ought not to have this *largesse* given to them in order to induce them to decide matters in any particular way. It was quite impossible that the great change in the administration of the Poor Law in the Metropolis to which he referred, could have taken place without very considerable hardship to the poor who were concerned. The House knew perfectly well that it was not everybody who went before the Poor Law Guardians and asked for relief, and was refused outdoor relief and was offered the workhouse, who would accept the workhouse. He could point to a good many people who would suffer almost any privation—cold and hunger, and almost starvation—rather than face the workhouse. One of the great reasons for this—and he should like to point it out clearly to the House—was that the classification of our country workhouses was not really of such a character as to render it possible for people who had any self-respect left to enter the workhouse. They were obliged to herd with people they had no sympathy with, and whose company they were not accustomed to, and the result was that they would submit to almost any privation rather than enter the workhouse. But even those who accepted the workhouse, what did they have to suffer? They had to suffer the loss of their homes, which, of course, were shattered and ruined and broken up, and in consequence of that they lost all opportunity which otherwise might be left to them of starting afresh when better times came, and when fortune became kinder. Some two months ago he was in communication with the secretary of one of the best of our London charities, one of those associated for some time with the name of Lord Shaftesbury, who had been president of it. He had taken the opportunity of asking this gentleman, who was in touch with the very poor of London, what he thought of the present, the modern and extremely severe system of Poor Law relief, and he said this—

> "I certainly think that it would be of great advantage to both the poor and the ratepayer if some relaxation of the rules of the Guardians were made in time of sickness and in the case of widows with children too young to work. I have seen many homes broken up when a little help would have tided them over."

He (Mr. A. W. Hall) implored the Government not to be instrumental in bringing about in the country districts the evils which this gentleman whom he had quoted had ascertained to be taking place in the Metropolis. There were far too many of those evils already in country districts, and notably, perhaps, in the city which he had the honour to represent. He trusted the Government would not make them general throughout the country by means of this Bill. He would like to say to them this, that if they did not mean to deal really with the Poor Law on a good broad basis, as some Members of the House would like to see it dealt with, why, he would ask, should they touch it at all? Why should they not let it alone? Why should they make this Bill or themselves unpopular, or why should they make those who supported the Bill unpopular with the agricultural labourer and with the town labourer by giving this bribe—and he did not use the word offensively—to the Guardians to induce them to put every pauper into the workhouse. He did not think this was a fair way of treating the country districts. He did not think that either the town labourers or the agricultural labourers would go in for indiscriminate outdoor relief. The law was very strict on the point, and declared that except in cases of emergency no relief should be given out-of-doors to able-bodied men, and he did not think that the labourers of the country would desire any alteration of that law; but what they did think was that when a man had brought up his family respectably and well and had subscribed to his club—which, however, only gave him assistance for a limited period—and when it had been impossible for him to make anything like a big enough purse to keep him when he arrived at old age, he ought not to be thrust into the workhouse to herd with those who had not lived respectable lives. He thought that was a feeling they ought to encourage, and a feeling of which they ought to be proud. It was a good old English feeling, and they ought to avoid anything which had a tendency to destroy it and discourage it, as some Boards of Guardians, particularly in London, did, to their disgrace be it said. He was told that they ought to compel thrift by a harsh administration of the Poor Law. But he had never been able to see it in that light, and he did not believe they could compel thrift by anything of the kind. He thought that as facts stood with the present congested state of the labour market it was impossible for the agricultural or urban labourer earning 10*s*., or 12*s*., or 14*s*. a week, in the first place, to render himself secure of constant employment; and, in the second place, even if he were sure of constant employment, to make a big enough purse to keep him when he became old. He himself knew a case of a hard-working, sober, steady, industrious, honest man, who had brought up a family decently and well. That man had been out of work the greater part of the winter, and at this moment he was unable to meet the calls upon him of his village club, though he had been for the past 32 years a subscribing member of it. At the present moment he did not know where to put his hand upon a sovereign which he owed to his club. He (Mr. A. W. Hall) would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board how he supposed that a man such as this was able to make a purse sufficient to keep him when he became sick or arrived at old age? The thing could not be done, and it was distressing to think that the Government should have gone out of their way, as he thought they had gone out of their way, to say to this man—"We will do something to induce the Boards of Guardians, when you become old and infirm, to offer you the workhouse, instead of that outdoor relief to which you have a reasonable claim." If outdoor relief was to be abolished, let it be done openly and above board, and let them have a debate about that in the House, and consult their constituents about it. He had not the slightest fear what the result would be. He did not believe that outdoor relief would ever be abolished. But do not let them by a back stair approach the matter in this insidious way by bribing the Guardians to give indoor relief whenever they could, instead of outdoor relief. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had told them the other night that there would be a great difficulty in appropriating this 40 per cent. Probate Duty in any other way. He said he did not see any fair proposition by which he could divide it between the different Unions. Well, he (Mr. A. W. Hall) must say that when a Minister had shown such capacity as had been exhibited by the right hon. Gentleman for dealing with all the details of such a difficult, complex, and voluminous Bill, and told the House of Commons that he could hit on no other plan than that of inducing the Guardians by means of a *largesse* to put everybody applying to them into the workhouse, he must say it became very difficult indeed to believe him. He was quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman in this matter did himself too little credit. It would be perfectly easy for the right hon. Gentleman to find out, not one, but half-a-dozen ways by which this money could be distributed amongst the ratepayers. The county ratepayers would have no difficulty in accepting as much as the right hon. Gentleman would choose to give, but they had a difficulty in accepting it on the condition that they should give some sort of return for it other than they would give by deciding each case upon its merits. They desired to treat each case upon its merits, and not upon some fancy scheme of the Local Government Board, which the Board were going to bribe them to adopt. He (Mr. A. W. Hall) only wanted to add one or two words as to the other proposition of the Bill. He should like to say as to the Municipal Corporations part of it that he had listened with great attention to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board the other night, and he was rather surprised that the right hon. Gentleman had devoted so few of his remarks to the feeling of the Municipal Corporations with regard to the Bill. He (Mr. A. W. Hall) had attended a large meeting of the Municipal Corporations at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and was surprised to notice the great feeling of suspicion which was there exhibited as to what were considered the losses of the Municipal Corporations under this Bill. He had thought that they had counted their losses much more readily than they had counted their gains, and if he had spoken at the meeting, which he did not, he should have pointed out that the Bill was not a Bill for the government of villages, but a Bill for the government of England and Wales, and that to eliminate from it boroughs of a smaller population than 30,000 or 40,000 would be destructive of the County Councils, because it was essential that the experience which had been derived in the cases of such boroughs should be at the service of the County Councils to help them in organization and in other ways; but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman might adopt a lower limit than 100,000. It would be well, perhaps, to accept the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) and put the limit at 40,000. This would be satisfactory to the borough he represented, and to many other similar boroughs. And he thought, furthermore, that the Local Council, when established, should have the duty of licensing public-houses conferred upon them. He could not agree with the proposed system of dual control. He could not help thinking that it was something like a lack of generosity on the part of the House of Commons to insist upon this dual control. Why should half be given to the County Councils and half to the Justices? He could not see the reason. The right hon. Gentleman had said that they were extending the Municipal Acts in this matter, but he also told them that the analogy was by no means perfect, because if it were acted upon they would have the unity of the district boroughs with the County Councils established. The county Justices had done their work with great efficiency and economy, and, therefore, it seemed to him that it would be a graceful act on the part of the House of Commons to acknowledge the good work which had been done by the Justices; and inasmuch as the whole judicial power was in their hands they should also be entrusted with the care of the police. He hoped the Government would accept the protest which he had ventured to make with regard to the matter of the indoor poor. He was confident that in this respect there was a very great blot on the Bill—a blot which would tend almost entirely to destroy the popularity of the measure when it was understood by the constituents of hon. Members.

Mr. FULLER (Wilts, Westbury) said, he did not intend to travel over the very large number of important questions they had had before them in this discussion, but it seemed to him that there had been some particular portions of the Bill which had not been dealt with in a way altogether deserving of their importance. Speaking as a County Magistrate, he must say that in his opinion the measure did not appear to contain the means of in any way deposing the magistrates from their present position. In his opinion the Bill appeared rather to raise their status than to make any other change in their position. Hitherto the position the County Magistrates had held had been one with responsibility far and away from the touch of the people. In his mind, the duties and functions which had hitherto rested on the County Magistrates had been more delusive than anything else, and, therefore, he thanked the Government for having come to the conclusion that the time had now arrived for putting magistrates in the position they ought to occupy as Justices of the Peace. He considered the Bill very useful and very far reaching. He could not agree with that authority that had declared to the country that in his opinion the powers which were to be given to the County Council were of an infinitesimal character. He believed that the powers given by this Bill to the County Council were very extensive. They were powers which required very delicate handling, and they were, of course, of a very responsible nature, and every Member of the House who had carefully considered the 8th clause of the Bill, coupled as it was to something like five and a-half pages in the Schedule, conferring extraordinary powers upon the Council, must come to the conclusion that these powers were very valuable and of a very important nature. Now, there was one matter in particular upon which he wished to draw the attention of the House, and that was a point which had been frequently spoken of, but which had not been considered exactly in the way in which he would venture to make some remarks upon it. He referred to the dual control of the police. Now, so far as he understood the Bill, its whole object was to alter the functions of the magistracy and the administrative powers dealing with public money. In future there were to be two separate Bodies, one consisting of the magistrates, who were to discharge the judicial functions which the magistrates at present carried out, and another Body, in the shape of County Councils, to discharge the duty of administrating public moneys. The main object of the Bill was that representation and taxation should follow one another, but if they brought about this system of dual control by Joint Committees of the Magistrates and of the County Councils, they would destroy that first principle. It had been discussed in the House more as a matter of expediency whether the magistrates should have any control over the police or whether the police should be in the hands of the Joint Committee or in the hands of the County Council, but he thought that beyond that question of expediency there was another view to be taken of the matter. It was said that, according to one of their most sacred Constitutional rules, the Body of the State that administered judicial functions should be entirely distinct and separate from that Body of the State that carried out its executive functions; and, therefore, he thought it very necessary as a Constitutional rule that the executive portion of the functions of the magistracy should be entirely separate from their judicial functions. He thought that this matter required to be considered almost in an historical light, because if they looked back at the time when first the Justices of the Peace were formed in this country as a body, and at the time when parish constables were initiated, they would find curiously enough that both these bodies were instituted at the same period, and that yet at that time the Crown nominated, as it did now, the "Conservators of the Peace," or, as they were now called, Justices of the Peace, but that the parish constable was elected and chosen by the people. That condition of things lasted for something like 200 years, and then they came to the period when it was found necessary for the Justices of the Peace to interfere. And why was it that they were allowed to interfere? It was not because the duties of the constables were not carried out as they ought to be, but because those duties were found to be too extensive in those parishes where the number of inhabitants was very large. The consequence was that the Legislature, not knowing where to put its hands on people to force the parishes to appoint a sufficient number of constables, imposed that duty upon the magistrates. This went on for 200 or 300 years longer, until the period when the model upon which the present Bill was founded was passed as an Act of Parliament, which brought them to the year 1835. Well, if that principle, which was established so many hundreds of years ago, of the Crown nominating the magistrates on the one hand, and the people nominating the constables on the other, lasted up to the year 1834, when the Municipal Corporations Act was passed, if it was necessary to change the system at all it would have been changed then; but, as a matter of fact, it was not changed. They would not find in any portion of the Municipal Corporations Act any vestige of those provisions tending towards the introduction of a power to the magistrates to take the control of the constabulary or watchmen as they were called at that time. Therefore, he contended that the Bill, by introducing as the 7th clause—an effective means of putting the whole control of the police in the hands of the Justices—the Government was acting directly in contradiction of the model they proposed to follow, and not only that, but they had had it stated in the House over and over again that there was no evidence that the Municipal Corporations had in any way failed in constituting proper and efficient constabulary forces throughout the various municipal areas of the country. That had been urged so often that he would not detain the House on the matter. He would like to ask the Government this question — namely, whether it was not the fact that in India some years ago the magistrates had full control of the constabulary as we had in England at this moment; and was it not the fact that it was found necessary in that country where we exercised very despotic powers to entirely alter that system, and put the management of the constabulary in the hands of a Body distinct from the magistrates. He said, therefore, if that was the case in India, surely it was an example to follow at the present time. Well, he should like, also, to impress upon the House that there was a very strong desire on the part of the people, particularly the middle class of the people, that they should have control over the police. A very curious instance had come within his own knowledge. A Board of Guardians upon which he himself had acted as an *ex officio* Member wanted to use the police for a particular purpose as regarded the treatment of vagrants. Some Guardians suggested that it would be desirable to use the superintendent of police and the constables rather as a means of checking the vagrancy; and as a result it was suggested that a small stipend should be given to the superintendent of police as an assistant relieving officer. That was suggested to the Board of Guardians, but those who supported the scheme found it most vigorously opposed by the farmers and the Guardians generally. They also found the reason for the opposition. It was opposed, not on account of the power it was proposed to put in the hands of the police, but because it was considered that the police were the servants of the magistrates and not of the people. The result was that although the Guardians did not disapprove of the scheme itself, yet because they disliked the condition of giving money to the police as servants of the magistrates they threw out the proposal. Finding that that was the state of the case, he (Mr. Fuller) took it upon himself to attempt to bring about the result he desired by stratagem. He went to the superintendent of the police and said to him, "If you want to have this office, the best way for you to secure it is this. Whenever you see a farmer give to him that ordinary salute which you give to a Justice of the Peace, and not only you yourself, but let every one of your men in the district show in like manner respect for the farmers and intimate that they wished to be their servants." Well, the effect of these tactics was magical. Within a very few months, instead of the Guardians opposing the object he had in view, that object was carried out, and the plan so established was continued for many years, though it did not exist at the present moment. The superintendent of police held the office to which he referred for many years. That showed that there was a strong public feeling, not so much amongst the democracy as amongst the middle class themselves, that the police were really the servants of the magistrates and not the servants of the people. He put that forward as one of the reasons why the County Councils should have sole control of the police. There was another reason. If he read this Bill rightly—and he had read it very carefully—it appeared to him that its whole object was to secure on the County Council as many magistrates as possible. If that was the case, he thought the House might assume that in future they would have a large number of magistrates on the County Council. If they had a very large number, who would these magistrates be? They would generally be the very best and most useful magistrates, and as a result they would have to go to the remaining magistrates in order to select from them the Committee to act with the Committee of the County Council, and they would be thus taking an inferior section of the magistracy and making them superior to their colleagues on the County Council. They would be, in this way, dividing the House against itself, and for this reason he maintained that they were not taking the best means they could adopt for their object, or to make the County Councils thoroughly efficient bodies. Then they had in the Bill a clause which gave them every possible power to see that the standard of efficiency would be in accordance with the wishes of the Home Secretary and the Government. In the 24th clause there was every power for keeping up that efficiency. They had a power of *mandamus*, which was the strongest power they could give for the purpose of controlling this matter. These were arguments which, so far as he was aware, had not been used before, and he thought that they were worthy of the consideration of the Government. So far as he had watched the debate, there seemed to him at the present moment to be a considerable consensus of opinion that the County Council ought to be invested with this important power, not only on grounds of expediency, but also on Constitutional grounds which he would impress upon the House. With regard to the Constitutional question, he wished to press this consideration. They knew that when a magistrate was appointed he began to make himself acquainted with the laws of his country. He began to study Constitutional law, and he had no doubt that the library of almost every Justice in the country would be found to contain a copy of *Blackstone's Commentaries.* In that work would be found this passage:—

> "There could be no doubt that in the distinct and separate existences of the judicial functions of a peculiar body of men, nominated, indeed, but not removable, by the pleasure of the Crown, consisted one of the main preservatives of popular liberty, which liberty could not exist long in any State unless the administration of common justice were in some degree separated from the Executive power."

He did not wish to make any distinction between the two sides of the House on this matter, as he did not desire to see it considered as a Party question, but he appealed to the Government side of the House, because, at all events, they assumed to themselves to be a Constitutional Party, and he would urge upon the Constitutional Party that they should not appear to be in any way undermining those old and sacred liberties which had been contended for in the country for so many generations. He would now pass on from the question of the police, and, if he might be allowed, he should like to make a few remarks respecting the financial question. He felt extremely thankful to the Government that they had at all events grappled with the question of making personal property contribute to a certain extent towards the rates of this country. It was a matter which had been talked of for a long time, and he was very thankful to the Government that they had, at length, seen their way to making an attempt to put the matter in something like a definite shape. But he would point out to the House that it seemed to him that the particular taxes which were fixed upon for assisting the rates upon property at present by the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been rather unfortunately chosen. According to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which had been circulated, and which was in the hands of all hon. Members, something like £3,000,000 was to come from certain licences. This sum was to come partly from licences which were directly transferred to the County Councils, and some which were called local taxation licences which were not directly transferred, but which would by an Order in Council possibly be eventually transferred for levying purposes to the County Council. But he had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been very wise and very discreet in putting on these taxes for the purpose of relieving the rates, and why so? Because everyone of these taxes were of the most odious and vexatious character, and he could not help thinking that as soon as the taxpayers recognized the fact that every tax they paid was a tax towards reducing the rates of the country, they would make it their business, either themselves or through associations, to so harass the County Councils in regard to these taxes that the County Councils would hardly know how to conduct their business. When they looked through this list of taxes, they found that there were no less than 20 different licences affected, some of very small amounts; and not only this, but they affected trades to a very great extent. A great many trades were inconvenienced and harassed very largely by these taxes, and it seemed to him that it was most important for the Government to consider whether it would not be far better if they wanted money to tax those particular items for the use of the Government generally and not to put the onus of such taxation on the County Councils. That onus would be more than the County Councils could stand. His own opinion was this, if he might be allowed to suggest it to the Government. It was, perhaps, rather presumptuous on his part. He would say that instead of having these £3,000,000 given by these taxes—and they knew what opinion was abroad with regard to some of them, particularly the Wheel Tax, as to which there would no doubt be a great discussion in this House, which would be continued in the country year after year and forced upon the attention of the County Councils periodically—he would suggest that instead of having this £5,500,000 given by these numerous licences, and the four-fifths of one-half of the Probate Duty, it would be much better for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to adopt the more direct system of a charge upon personal property. He could give over the whole of the £4,000,000 of the Probate Duty, which was a direct tax on personal property, and give to the County Councils, if he could spare it, the penny of the Income Tax, which was another direct tax upon personal property. By this means the right hon. Gentleman would get rid of the difficulties which he (Mr. Fuller) had pointed out, and he was sure this proposal was worthy of consideration. By these means the great difficulty which would constantly arise on the meetings of the County Councils would be got rid of. In all probability the argument against not giving these licences to the County Councils was that, if they gave anything else than that which was proposed by the Government, they would not be acting upon the theory that representation and taxation should go together. His answer, however, was that if that was the principle they wished to carry through, they were not carrying it through at all, because this £5,500,000 was not made up on that principle—far from it. There was one other point to which he felt bound to pay a little attention—namely, the way in which the distribution of these grants was to be carried out. It was proposed that £1,200,000 should be given towards the relief of the poor on the basis of 4*d.* being paid for each indoor pauper. He thought that was wrong on two grounds. First of all, it was wrong on the principle of the administration of the Poor Law, a point which had been dealt with so thoroughly by his hon. Friend. Secondly, he did not think that real property, as rated at the present time, had any claim to relief on account of the poor rate. It appeared to him they were instituting a State policy, as regarded the administration of the Poor Law, of thrusting poor people into the workhouse, because Guardians might find it very much cheaper in future to send people into the workhouse than to give them outdoor relief. Let them take ordinary cases; he did not want to take any particular case, because hundreds and thousands might be found. Cases of this sort came up constantly. An old man or an old woman could scarcely make ends meet, but if they could only get 1*s.* and a loaf or two—the whole relief would not amount to more than 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week—it perhaps would enable them to tide over the difficulty they could not otherwise get over. At present the Guardians, seeing such a case, would naturally give the 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week relief; but in the future, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) adopted indoor pauperism as the basis for the distribution of grants, the Guardians would feel themselves forced to drive such people as he had described into the workhouse. It was true he had not long been a Member of Parliament, but he had been long enough a Member to learn that the working classes of the country had set their faces against the workhouse. If there was one thing the working people wished to see destroyed and levelled to the ground it was the workhouse. The feeling might be wrong, but still it existed. Now, if Parliament, by a State policy, forced upon the democracy of this country a principle that would irritate that feeling, the feeling might amount to a danger. But what he particularly wished to impress upon the House was that, in his opinion, real property, as it was now rated, had no just claim to be relieved in any way. Statistics had been produced which showed that the history of the poor rate was that, decade by decade during the last century, the rate had decreased, and that it had now arrived at a lower figure than it had ever been. Therefore, he could not see, although a landowner himself, that any landowner had a just claim to that relief which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) seemed so anxious to obtain. The maintenance of the poor had been a direct charge upon land and houses, and that charge had not been increasing, but gradually decreasing. On that ground, therefore, he maintained that the principle of giving £1,200,000 as a grant in aid was wrong. The next suggestion which he thought wanted consideration was that which had been thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman had offered to the House a suggestion, other than that he had adopted, as to how to distribute these grants in aid. He had said they might distribute the money according to the population, or according to the rateable value, or according to indoor pauperism, and he had chosen the latter method. The object the right hon. Gentleman had in view was to arrive at what were the poorest areas, the areas which required assistance from the grants in aid from personal property. There must be hundreds of ways of arriving at such a conclusion; but he (Mr. Fuller) ventured to suggest one way of testing the poverty or wealth of an area—namely, through the House Duty. He considered there could be no better test of the wealth of a population than the character of the houses in which they lived. The House Tax was levied upon houses of £20 annual value and upwards; and taking up the Inland Revenue Report for 1886, he had compared this basis of finding out the poverty or wealth of an area as compared with the indoor pauper basis which the right hon. Gentleman had adopted in the Bill. He had only, however, been able to make a comparison between London and the rest of England and Wales. He found that the annual value of dwelling houses in London paying House Duty in 1886 amounted, in round figures, to £22,000,000, and that the annual value of the dwelling houses in the rest of England and Wales paying House Duty was £33,000,000. Therefore, taking the two amounts as the basis, of every £10,000 received as grant in aid for personal property London would receive £4,000, and the rest of England and Wales £6,000. Now, they found that the indoor paupers in London in 1886 numbered 55,000, and that those of all England and Wales numbered 188,000. Therefore, taking indoor pauperism as the basis of distribution, London would receive, assuming that £10,000 was the grant received from personal property, London would get rather more than £3,000, and that the rest of England and Wales would get rather more than £6,000. There was a very small difference as regarded the distribution in each case, and, therefore, he suggested that the House Duty was a good means of arriving at an idea of the wealth or poverty of an area. The House Duty was certainly a safer and a better test than the indoor pauperism, for the reason he had already endeavoured to give to the House, because it would be a fatal policy to drive the poor people into the workhouse. He had said he did not approve of £1,200,000 being given as assistance to the rates on real property. Then the question arose, what rates would they relieve? There were different classifications of rates; there were rates which were necessary only for metropolitan and urban districts, there were rates which were necessary for the maintenance of the poor, and there were rates which were necessary and levied both in urban and rural districts. He considered that the metropolitan and urban rates did not require any subvention or assistance from grants-in-aid from personalty. They were special rates necessary, perhaps, for very large urban districts such as the Metropolis and other large towns, but if anyone went into the question he would find that such rates were not generally requisite. Harbours and docks and wash-houses and public libraries, and things of that kind, were luxuries which might be demanded by urban authorities, but which ought to be provided out of special rates. Again, he had said that the maintenance of the poor had no claim to this subvention. Then, they they came to that other class of rates which he believed did require assistance, and they were the rates that had been introduced within their memories, the rates that had been collected with the poor rates and that had, within the last 30 or 40 years, been increased to a very great extent. They were the rates necessary for sanitation and education, for the enforcement of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, for weights and measures, police stations, lunatic asylums, lighting, paving, registration, vaccination, and things of that sort. His opinion was that the relief they were to receive from personal property ought to go towards those particular rates, and not towards the rates for the maintenance of the poor or for simply urban matters. The whole grant-in-aid, according to the statement of the President of the Local Government Board, was £5,500,000. By Clause 23 of the Bill, the County Councils were ordered to pay over to the various districts £2,300,000. There was no objection to that, because provisions for the police and for the assistance of pauper lunatics was included in the sum. But by Clause 15 of the Bill, upwards of £1,000,000 was to go towards the highways. He was very glad to find that there was power given to the County Councils to assist certain districts where the highway rates were extremely high. The great object in a national question like this should be to equalize the burden in all localities so far as possible under the circumstances. They knew that, as a matter of fact, highway rates were very much higher in some places than in others from no mismanagement, but from natural causes. In some places there were no materials, and consequently the cost of maintaining the roads was extremely heavy. Therefore, he was glad power was given to the County Councils to distribute a certain amount of money, so as to equalize the highway rates in the various parts of the county. He saw no objection to the grant of £2,300,000 under Clause 23, or to the £1,000,000 for the highways; and the suggestion he had to make was that the balance between those two items and the £5,500,000 should be appropriated to the relief of those rates which had become onerous and burdensome during recent years. He thanked the House for the patience with which they had listened to him upon this subject. Of course, there were many subjects he should like to have dealt with, but he had already trespassed too long upon the attention of the House. He would only say he was extremely glad to be able to feel that, at all events, they were now progressing, and that there was every probability of them accomplishing, in the near future, a popular, useful, and permanent measure of reform.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping) said, he did not wish to detain the House for more than a few moments; but there were one or two points to which he desired to refer. The hon. Member for the Westbury Division of Wiltshire (Mr. Fuller) had dealt with various points of the Bill, and had objected to the way in which the Bill proposed to charge the amount that was to be contributed to the maintenance of the poor upon personal as well as other property. His (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson's) recollections might be imperfect, but, as far as they went, the words of the old Act of Elizabeth were, that the rates should be chargeable upon the "ability" of persons rather than upon their rateable property. That, as far as it went, was an answer to the position the hon. Gentleman had taken up. Upon the whole question of the contribution in aid of the poor there was much to be said; it was undoubtedly a question of great difficulty. They all knew the tendency there must be in the minds of those who administered a grant of this sort to carry out, perhaps, further than it ought to go the separation between indoor and outdoor poor. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman who deprecated the entire abolition of outdoor relief. But the House must remember that the whole tendency of our Poor Law system of late years had been, while preserving some outdoor relief in cases of real necessity, to do so in a way which would prevent able-bodied people throwing themselves as a charge upon the parish. He did not think they need dread even this new precaution as an incentive to indoor relief, remembering that those who administered it would be supervised and influenced by the feelings of the locality in regard to their conduct. Now, what led him, perhaps, most of all to speak upon this Bill was that he had for a long time taken a totally different view to the hon. Member for the Westbury Division of Wiltshire (Mr. Fuller) in regard to the management of the police force of the country. He had had experience in dealing with the police force in the past, and he asserted that there would be great danger in the transfer of the police of this country to the control of an elected body, such as our County Councils were to be. He confessed he did not like the proposal of the Government for a Joint Committee for dealing with this force. He did not like it, because he believed it would lead to an amount of friction in the future which he did not wish to see imported into the matter. He considered that, inasmuch as the magistrates were to be left with judicial functions and with the administration of the law, the police, the engines which carried out that administration, ought to be under the control of the magistrates rather than under the control of a popular body. At all events, until they saw far better than they could at present what the working of the Councils of the future would be, the police force, upon which law and order and the whole administration of justice rested, should be left in the hands of those who had managed that force in the past. He could not help looking with alarm on the possibility of a local agitation arising on a particular subject that might divide very strongly the inhabitants of some particular part of the country; he could not help looking with alarm at the way in which a conflict might arise as to the carrying out of law and order. It was not very long ago that there was a necessity of enforcing the law in a particular part of this country by the interference of the police, and to enforce it, as they all knew, against the opinion of a very large body of the people of that part of the country. He referred to the Tithe War in Wales. Would anyone tell him that if the police force had been put under the control of a Local Council in that country the magistrates of the country would have had any power whatever of enforcing the law? If such a sharp division of public opinion were to occur in any part of this country also, he believed that there would be considerable danger of the law not being enforced under the proposed circumstances. He knew that with regard to this question it was said that they could not separate the control of a particular force from the people who would have to raise the money for the support of that force. But surely that might be guarded against by providing that the precept issued by the magistrates for the amount required for the police force should be subject to the supervision of the Central Authority—namely, the Home Office, and that the amount asked for should only be an amount absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the police force of the county in a proper state of efficiency. He hoped the Government would look carefully again into this question, because he knew that the opinion which he held was shared by a large number of his brother magistrates, who had had sometimes to conduct the affairs in their particular counties. Certainly, the matter ought to be most carefully considered before the idea of handing over the police, either to a Joint Committee or to the future Councils, was entertained at all. One other point had been specially referred to that night by previous speakers, and if the House would allow him he should like to say a few words upon it, and that was the question of licensing. He had had in past years something to do with the Bills that were passed, and that had been mentioned that night. The Bill of 1869 was his own, and in the Bills of 1872 and 1874 he had to take a considerable part. Although he might seem to differ on some points from those in authority on that side of the House, and although, not being a lawyer, perhaps he had no right to interfere in the legal argument, he could only say that at the time those Bills were passed, and when he was in constant communication with all parties on the subject, the question of the absolute legal right of suspending or taking away a licence was never disputed; but although that right was never disputed, and as a dry legal position he believed it could not be disputed, still it was then said, as he said now, that a moral right had supervened, and that the custom which had gone on for years of renewing licences as a matter of course, except in the case of bad conduct, had practically established a right which the law did not give. It was that moral right which he believed was possessed now without a shadow of legal right, and for that moral right he believed the holders of licences were entitled to some compensation, if not the compensation provided by the Bill. He knew it had been said, and said by a great authority, that that had been altered by the introduction of the amendments of the law that were made in the years 1872 and 1874. He could not help thinking, from what he remembered of the past, that the account the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) gave of the reasons for the alterations of the law which were then made were the right reasons. He believed that they were made from a feeling that the custom had given such a right to a renewal, unless there were offences which were proved against the holders of the licences. There was one other point in regard to the licensing part of the Bill which he desired to mention. He confessed he should have preferred himself to have seen the Licensing Clauses of the Bill relegated to a future action of the House, for he looked with some alarm to the first election of the County Councils throughout the country, lest those Councils should be elected on the lines simply of temperance or the brewers' interest, and that the general interests of the counties should not be considered. He was much afraid that they might see the election take such sharp divisions, and that they might not get an authority as satisfactory as if it were elected without such considerations being imported into the matter. Therefore it was that he should have liked to have seen the Licensing Clauses postponed until the Councils were fairly established in the country, and dealt with in a separate Bill on a future occasion. He believed that under such circumstances they would have got greater efficiency in the body to which he looked forward as a sound body in the future for carrying out the business of counties; because he could hardly hope that if the elections were fought on the sharp lines he had referred to, they would get as satisfactory a body as they otherwise would get. With these two or three minor objections, he hailed with pleasure the introduction of what he believed was new vitality into county life, and he was not one of those who were afraid that those who had administered the business of the counties in the past would not have their full share in the administrotion of them in the future.

Mr. A. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) said, that on Monday night the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) suggested that long debate on the second reading of the Bill was not needed. Before that suggestion was made, there had been considerable discussion upon this great and complicated measure, and since then its various propositions had been subjected to searching criticism. The right hon. Gentleman taunted the Party to which he once belonged with not knowing what they wanted, and with not being able to rest until they got it. As a matter of fact, he (Mr. Williams) scarcely remembered a debate in which such important results had been arrived at as the present. First of all, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), himself the author of a great scheme of Local Government, occupied the attention of the House by a series of criticisms which were of great value. Then, again, the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was enabled, by a masterly treatment of the financial aspect of the case, to bring before the country, which understood so little about it, all the thorny and serious questions which were involved in that side of the Bill. So, again, the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was able to expose the great principle underlying the Licensing Clauses, and the hon. Baronet was followed by the hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), and by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) who, by his reply, had aroused the attention of the Kingdom. Subsequently to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, they had the privilege of listening to one of the most striking speeches ever delivered—the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney). The eloquence, power, and dignity of that speech lifted the hon. Gentleman into a position even beyond that which he had justly occupied in the House. Though, in theory, he (Mr. Williams) had long adhered to the views which the hon. Gentleman put forward in his speech, he had not been able to follow the hon. Gentleman into its development. Furthermore, they had had the advantage of listening to another remarkable speech, that of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long). By its ability, its readiness, and its adroitness, that speech lifted the hon. Gentleman at once into the front rank of debaters in the House. Towards the end of his speech the hon. Member said that the Bill was not drawn in the interest of the squire, or of the upper classes, but in that of the democracy; and so adroit and ingenious was the way in which he put the point that he (Mr. Williams) began to fancy he must be right. But, on consideration, he did not think the hon. Gentleman had repaired the tactical blunder which Lord Salisbury made when he blurted out at Carnarvon that this was not a democratic or Radical Bill, but a Conservative Bill. Why, a democratic Local Government Bill would give, once for all, to every class and section of the people not only full power, but full scope to deal freely and fairly with all that locally affected their daily life and well-being. Proper local self-government, like charity, would begin at home, and that was why he held the opinion that a great mistake had been made in not beginning with the immemorial home of local self-government in the country—namely, the parish. The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) took the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) to task for venturing to submit that they might have done well to make the parish the unit. The hon. Gentleman said there were 15,000 parishes in England and Wales, and that 6,398 of these had not more than 300 inhabitants. In his (Mr. Williams') constituency, in the Vale of Glamorgan, there were 86 parishes, and in 26 of these the population did not exceed 200; in 12 of them the population was under 100, and in one parish there were only 31 inhabitants. When Sir Charles Dilke referred to parishes, in that remarkable speech which he delivered in 1885, he, of course, did not mean the parishes as they now existed. They who advocated the creation of the parish as the unit did not say they should build up the local government of the counties out of such parishes, as they found, for instance, in the Vale of Glamorgan. No; they said that the parishes should be the parishes as they ought to be. At present the inhabitants of a parish had, practically, no organization or power at all. They were merged, for all practical purposes of administration, in the Poor Law Union, and that, of course, must, to a great extent, continue. What would the parishes have to do, it might be asked? In the parish in which he had spent his life there were 1,365 inhabitants. It had 7,000 acres of land, which were owned by less than 30 persons—chiefly by one or two persons. The land was tilled and occupied by 58 tenants. The other householders, chiefly labourers, were 65. There were several local charities in the hands of the rector and churchwardens. The parishioners had no power. The Vestry had absolutely nothing to do. Could anyone wonder that, under such circumstances, the farmers and labourers took no interest in parochial affairs? There were no parochial affairs to take an interest in as parishes now existed. The only interest the 58 tenant farmers of his parish, in which he was a landowner to a small extent, had in the parish was to scrape as much as they could out of the farms they occupied, and put as little as they could into them, because they knew that at any moment they might be turned out of their holdings. And what interest could labourers have in their parishes, except in getting their 15*s.* or 16*s.* a-week? They saw large tracts of uninclosed common land, but they knew that they could not put a foot upon it, or that if they ventured to build a cottage upon it the lord of the manor or his agent would come down and prevent them. They had seen for generations thousands upon thousands of acres of land, which, he maintained, belonged to themselves, inclosed and appropriated by landlords. They knew that the landlords would take the remainder if they had the opportunity. They would not take what was left of the common land in his parish, because he (Mr. Williams) happened to be a landlord; they never would do it there. Now, a farmer, if he had power given him to interfere in parochial affairs, would not care to do so as long as he was liable to be turned out of his farm at any moment. It was the constant fear that at any moment their tenancies might be terminated which made his tenants, just as well as those of other landlords, afraid to tell their minds to their landlords. What was the change which the Democratic Party would before long make in reference to the parishes? Suppose they could make the farmer independent of his landlord, and suppose they could make the labourer independent of the farmer. [*Laughter.*] He observed that hon. Gentlemen opposite smiled at that; but it was upon such principles that the greatness and liberty and independence of the United States had been built up. De Tocqueville had described the independence and the democratic constitution of the townships of the United States, and those townships were the exact counterpart of the English parish. In the townships of America the citizens assembled once a-year and elected their committee, who ordered the execution of public works and raised money. That was exactly what he and his hon. Friends said should have been provided for here. The Government ought to have begun by giving the labourers and tenant farmers of each parish an independent position and large control over parochial affairs. That was the true democratic way in which a great system of local self-government could be built up. The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) said, the other night, that the parish might very well have its powers extended and enlarged. Let them take his (Mr. Williams') parish, with its 1,400 inhabitants, its 58 tenants, and its 65 labourers, and apply the New England system to it. He would have the old parish vestry turned into a corporation, and the parochial property and charities put into the hands of the people. Annually, the inhabitants would meet and elect a committee—a simple committee. They might combine, with other parishes, in engaging a clerk to conduct their affairs. The committee would find that the 60 labourers were anxious to have allotments. Instead of having recourse to the Bill of last year, of which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) was so proud, but which had been a complete failure, because the compulsory powers were too complicated to be of any use whatever, some simple method, such as an application to the County Court Judge, would be devised for securing allotments to labourers. A great mistake had been made in not making the parish the unit. He was very much afraid that if they had County Councils to which the shopkeeper, the artizan, and the labourer never could go, but which must, of necessity, be composed of men of leisure and means, the result would not be satisfactory. The way proposed in the Bill was not the way in which great democratic institutions were built up, and he maintained that he and his hon. Friends were justified in pointing out to the country the fatal defect in the Bill, that the Government had begun at the wrong end of reform.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) said, he would promise the House that he would not detain them for more than a few minutes, because he was very conscious the opinions he held in regard to this measure were not in accord with those which were held by the vast majority of Members on either side of the House. He was afraid that the expression of what he had been used to think Tory opinions were now very much out of place in the House of Commons—he was afraid nowhere more, say, than upon the Benches from which he spoke, because he could not help feeling that if they on that side of the House supported the Bill they must do so as Ministerialists and not as Conservatives. He maintained, in spite of the recent declaration of the Prime Minister, that the Bill, were it bad or good, were it wise or unwise, were it just or unjust, were it necessary or unnecessary, was neither more nor less than the uprooting, the upheaval, the disturbance of that system of domestic government which had prevailed in this country for generations. To show what that system was, perhaps the House would allow him to read an extract from an article which appeared in *The Times* on the 30th of March. In the article, which was exceedingly laudatory of the measure, it was said—

> "Nobody whose opinion is worth anything denies that county business has been administered by the magistrates sitting at Quarter Sessions with absolute purity, with strict regard for economy, and, in general, with an efficiency which the new representative bodies may well take as a model."

And that was the system which it was now proposed to destroy, and in the place of which they proposed to try something, they knew not what. The object in which they were anxious to try an experiment was the Constitution of their country. It seemed to him that in both financial and domestic matters they had taken leave of their senses. Financially, they were now pursuing a system which was ridiculed and repudiated by every civilized nation in the world except this, and in their domestic matters they were now about to abandon an institution which, on every hand, was pronounced to be most exemplary. He protested against the doctrine announced on that side of the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), when he said that Conservatives ought to support a measure of the sort because of the pledges they had constantly given that they would deal with the question of Local Government. It was perfectly true they had constantly promised to deal with Local Government, but they never pledged themselves to this particular Bill. A good illustration of his argument was afforded by something which occurred the other night. The hon. Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) said that the House had pronounced strongly in favour of Local Option. Undoubtedly they had, but the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) made a very good answer to the hon. Baronet; he said it was true the House had pledged themselves to deal with the question, but when they came to the particular course the hon. Baronet proposed they were all at sixes and sevens. And so they, the Conservatives, had undoubtedly pledged themselves to deal with the question of Local Government; but that did not in the least prevent them expressing an opinion as to the shape the reform should take. Personally, he was utterly astounded that anyone calling himself Conservative could possibly support this measure, unless he were constrained to do so by political exigencies. The Bill might be approved by men who called themselves Tory Democrats. He did not understand what a Tory Democrat was, unless he was a man who might be described as a wolf in sheep's clothing, and whose clothing was of the very scantiest description. It appeared to him that Gentlemen calling themselves Tory Democrats began by announcing themselves as Members of the Tory Party, and then proceeded to preach the most revolutionary and violent doctrines. He, certainly, had no sympathy with them. It might be asked why, holding the opinions he did, he did not put down a Notice of practical opposition to the measure? He had two very good reasons for not doing so. First of all, bad as he believed the measure to be, he confessed it was inevitable on account of pledges, somewhat recklessly given, and on account of the abandonment by the Leaders of the Party of the principles which had always actuated Conservatives. That being so, if he had any common sense he must accept the inevitable; and, under the circumstances, he believed he should be discharging his duty as a private Member of Parliament if, in conjunction with those hon. Members around him who retained some Conservative principles, he objected to some of the most objectionable clauses of the Bill, and if, in Committee, he endeavoured to amend certain proposals of the Bill, especially those concerning the police. He was decidedly opposed to the suggestion to hand over the control of the police to a hybrid committee on the ground of the confusion which would be created in police management. The second reason which induced him to forego any active opposition to the Bill was that he believed the measure to be intimately connected with the Budget, and the Budget he regarded as one of the best which had been introduced for years. But there was one other reason which he was sure would commend itself to hon. Gentlemen opposite. It was this—that bad as he believed the Bill to be, he would accept it, or 10 others worse, rather than give a vote which might by any possibility lead to that which he believed would be the greatest calamity which could befall the country, and that was the accession to power of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone).

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) said, the hon. Member for the Faversham Division of Kent (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) who had just sat down appeared to be a few weeks behind the age, and to be ignorant of the state of feeling and altered circumstances amid which the Conservative Party now found itself. When the hon. Member spoke of Tory Democrats as being wolves in sheep's clothing, he appeared to have forgotten that the Leader of the Party at the present time was no longer the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), but two such sober-minded Conservatives of the old school as Lord Salisbury and Lord Cross. Speaking in Wales a short time ago, at Carnarvon, Lord Salisbury pointed out that this measure was not a Radical Bill at all; and Lord Cross, in addressing Tories of the old school at Wisbech, said there was no necessity for them to be afraid of any portion of the Bill. He (Mr. Stevenson) intended to utilize his Amendment on that occasion as a text upon which to found his speech. His Amendment, which was as follows:—

> "To move to leave out all the words after 'That,' in order to add 'no measure for the reform of Local Government will be satisfactory to this House which fails to deal with the administration of the parish, and which retains the Boards of Guardians, with their existing constitution, qualification, and mode of election' "—

pointed to the fact that, in regard to the interests of the agricultural labourers, the village artizans, and working classes generally in the counties, the present measure was dumb, or, so far as it touched them at all, it did not deal with them in the most satisfactory way. He thought his Amendment had been a fortunate one in other respects—first, because it had struck the key-note of much of the criticism passed on the provisions of the Bill; and, secondly, because it had not been ruled out of Order. But there was a certain technical difficulty in the way of proceeding with it. If it were formally moved, it would be impossible to deal with the measure as a whole, for the debate must be confined to the subject-matter, and the Government would be prevented from giving various explanations on certain points which had been asked for in different quarters of the House. He thought, therefore, it would be for the convenience of the House, and in the interest of the debate, if, instead of formally moving the Amendment, he took it as his text on this occasion. The Amendment dealt with two distinct questions—first, the subject of the government of the parish by the parish; and, secondly, the omission of the administration of the Poor Law from the scope of the Bill. As to the first question, he thought a signal change had come over the spirit of the Tory Party. At first they thought a revolutionary change had been proposed, and it was only after Lord Salisbury's speech that they were re-assured. The more they looked into the measure, the more it was obvious that differences of opinion might arise with respect to it. It was a maxim of the late Mr. Fawcett that it was a most unfortunate thing to praise a Bill on its introduction. If ever there was a Bill of which that might be said, surely this was the measure. The more the Bill had been looked into by every section of the House, the more it appeared to be obvious that it was, after all, to use a metaphor of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen), a wolf in sheep's clothing, and that it hid provisions which not only were the reverse of harmless, but which might be positively pernicious and harmful. As to the County Council, it seemed to him (Mr. Stevenson) that there would be a difficulty in having the feelings and wishes of the village artizan and the agricultural labourer expressed in it. They were told that the voters in counties would obtain a direct management in their own affairs by reason of being represented in the County and District Councils. But it had to be borne in mind that for a considerable time the sittings would be in county towns, and that those towns, as far as the agricultural labourers and the village artizans were concerned, might just as well be in Timbuctoo. A certain principle had been accepted—namely, the extension of the suffrage to the counties, and the fact that there should be a County Council created. That extension of the suffrage for local purposes was, after all, the irreducible minimum, the inevitable and necessary part of County Government, which could be introduced in 1888. What they had to do, therefore, was to carry out a measure by which the municipal life and the local energy might be fostered in the particular localities in which the bulk of the population were principally interested. But that would not be done by the County or the District Council, because the areas were too wide for ordinary purposes. In many parts of the country it was very rarely the case that neighbouring parishes had many interests in common, as witness the way in which some Boards of Guardians had dealt with the Allotments Act. What they wanted was a system which enabled the inhabitants of a parish to have a direct voice in the management of their own local affairs, without outside interference. Such questions as the management of the parochial schoolroom for public meetings, allotments, water supply, and the management of parochial charities might be referred to them. At present, Vestry meetings were a mere farce. They usually met at an hour when the bulk of the parishioners could not attend, and beyond that there was a system of plural voting in Vestry polls which was a serious impediment to the expression of the wishes and the wants of the inhabitants of the parish. The proper way of dealing with the reform of parish government was by developing the system of Vestry government, so as to enable the inhabitants of the parish to meet together to exercise their rights, not by delegating those rights to others, but by exercising them in their own corporate person. He would call the attention of hon. Members to extracts of the debate in 1871, which showed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) recognized the need for parish government when he introduced the Rating and Local Government Bill, and that even so late as 1885 the right hon. Gentleman had not changed his opinions. Again, in 1885, speaking in Edinburgh, the Chancellor of the Exchequer adverted to the necessity of giving the parishes some local life, and spoke of these three gradations—first the parish, then an aggregation of parishes; and, next, over these a County Authority was to be established. Although the right hon. Gentleman's scheme of 1871 was now thought to be impracticable, yet what he then said showed that the right hon. Gentleman realized the importance of dealing with the parish; and the wonder was that he had not succeeded in impressing those views on his present Colleagues. He (Mr. Stevenson) must suppose that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had changed his mind on that matter, as he had done on the allotment scheme and on various other questions. No man talked more loudly of political conscience than the right hon. Gentleman; and, whereas other men wore their hearts on their sleeve, the right hon. Gentleman wore his conscience on his, and it was to be feared that his conscience in that case had rather suffered from the exposure. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) appeared to be under the delusion that the scheme they now advocated was one for establishing Parochial Councils; but what they were really advocating was the extension and development of the principle of open Vestries. Speaking in 1885 on the subject of Local Government, the right hon. Member for West Birmingham himself put the parish first and foremost, and said that then Local Authorities should be constituted for the district and the county; and he could not understand how the right hon. Gentleman did not lay the same stress on that point now as he did in 1885. In referring to his (Mr. Stevenson's) Amendment, the right hon. Gentleman described it as an attempt on the part of the tail to wag the dog. Now, the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was one who ought to speak with great caution about the relations which subsisted between a dog and its tail; because at one time he might have been described as a tail without a dog, whereas now he was very much in the position of a dog without a tail. He (Mr. Stevenson) now came to the second blot in the Bill as affecting the agricultural districts—namely, the omission of the Poor Law administration from the scope of the measure. Why should the Board of Guardians be retained side by side with the District Councils; and as the Government proposed to deal with the boundaries of Rural Sanitary Authorities, what difficulty was there that might not be overcome in dealing with the boundaries of Unions on a similar principle? The present cost of the administration of the Poor Law was greatly out of proportion to the relief received; and under different arrangements—as, for instance, by transferring the care of the indoor poor to the County Council and that of the outdoor poor to the District Council and by the grouping of districts together—the Poor Law would be better and more economically carried out. The necessity for such a huge staff and such heavy establishment expenses as existed under the present system might be obviated. The Bill of the Government provided for a complication of areas and of authorities; whereas what they desired was simplicity of areas and of authorities, which had been provided in England ages ago. Again, the Bill proposed that the portion of the Probate Duty to be handed over to Local Authorities should be given in proportion to the number of indoor paupers. That provision would put a premium upon indoor pauperism and would operate unfairly, and it would be very unwise to insert it in the Bill unaccompanied by provisions placing Poor Law administration under popular control. The Bill would not give to those who were most interested in the proper administration of the Poor Law a direct influence in its management. The retention of the present system of Boards of Guardians side by side with the District Councils to be created by that measure was one of the greatest anomalies that could be devised. The Poor Law had exercised a pernicious influence upon English life; but that would not be remedied by the penal harshness which the Bill promoted. The feeling entertained on both sides of the House was that the question of the Poor Law ought not to be shelved, but should be dealt with speedily, and in accordance with the just claims of the English people. The question should be dealt with now in the Bill before them. It had been stated that to do this would be to overweight the ship. But there was a very obvious remedy in their hands. It was not impossible to devise a process by which the Licensing Clauses could be dropped out, and clauses dealing with the Poor Law substituted for them. On that side of the House they protested against the sins of omission and commission which characterized the Bill; and although he had refrained, with a view to the convenience of the House, from moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) that he and those who acted with him reserved for themselves complete liberty at any future stage to move to include in the Bill, which in its present form would be actually harmful and pernicious in many parts of the country, clauses dealing with Poor Law administration and the government of parishes.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, he could assure the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) that the Government were very grateful to him for his consideration. The hon. Member told the House that he did not move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, because he desired to consult the convenience of the House and the Government, who would not at once be able to meet the points which he put before them. The hon. Member might disabuse his mind of any such idea. He had no occasion whatever to consult the convenience of the Government. Their convenience would have been consulted best if the Amendment had been moved. The Government were quite prepared to meet it, whether the hon. Member moved it on the second reading or on any other stage of the Bill. The hon. Member had stated that the Bill was one which did not deserve the confidence of the country. He had made a speech in support of his Amendment, and yet he was not prepared to submit that Amendment to a vote. In the course of the debate it had been a somewhat convenient practice on the part of hon. Members not to endeavour to go over the whole ground covered by this great Bill, but to deal with certain portions of it, and it was his intention to approach the Bill from the point of view of one who knew the rural districts, and who thoroughly shared, and to a large extent sympathized with, the feelings expressed by his hon. Friends on that side of the House, and by some hon. Members on the other side, with regard to the way in which the Bill would be regarded by county magistrates. At the present time he filled the office of Vice Chairman of Quarter Sessions, and when he saw these great changes impending he was very much inclined to approach their consideration from the same point of view as many of his hon. Friends. He did not think that any one of them who was specially connected with Quarter Sessions could have failed to be extremely pleased with the manner in which testimony had been borne from all quarters of the House, no less emphatic than unanimous, to the efficiency and economy with which Justices had managed county affairs. He had every hope that those same powers which the county gentlemen of England had exercised in times past would be employed by them in the future, if they were elected, in discharging the more extended duties which the present Bill proposed to give. He said—if elected. He had no doubt whatever that the county gentlemen of England would in very large numbers be elected to the new Councils. They were the natural leaders in the rural districts; they had, time after time, been the protectors of the weak; and he could not but think that even in these distressful times which had fallen upon agriculture, when the failure of rent had made a large number of them more inclined to stay upon their own farms and devote themselves more particularly to their own immediate localities, they would come, if elected, to the new Councils with a fuller knowledge even than they had before of the wants of the inhabitants. If he had any doubt of that he should have greater fear than he had on the score of what appeared to him to be the greatest difficulty they had to contend with. It was not the want of interest on the part of the labourers. He did not believe it was necessary to establish parish Councils or to revive the parish Vestry in order to awaken the interest of the labourer. If parish life were to be reconstituted, someone would have to give a much more accurate description than had yet been given of the powers that were to be entrusted to the parish. As to control over public allotments, there were already provisions by which such control could be vested in a committee in every parish. The supply of water formed part of the great sanitary powers to be conferred upon District Councils; and it was surely not imagined that you could invest the parish with a power which could be exercised only for a much wider area? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) was taunted with having changed his opinions since 1871, when he strongly advocated the revival of parish life; but it must be remembered that since then a great change had been made in rural life by the formation of sanitary areas throughout the country. But the greatest difficulty now to be contended with was the getting of the members of the County Council to any place that might be selected for its meeting. The area of many counties was enormous, and the members of the County Councils had other important work to do; and the greatest danger was lest, through the non-attendance of members who would have a distance to travel, the business should fall into the hands of a narrow clique living in the town of meeting. The difficulty and the danger would be the greater if an enormous mass of duties was heaped upon the County Council. Many of those elected would have important affairs of their own to attend to, and if public duties called them to neglect their own business too much there would be danger that county business would fall into the hands of those who would not attend to it properly. Therefore he totally disagreed with the opinion that they should not deal with county administration without making a complete job of it. If all the duties that had been suggested were to be laid upon County Councils at once good men would be deterred from serving upon them. We ought not to reckon upon all county gentlemen being willing to stand as candidates; but everything ought to be done to facilitate their becoming candidates. The hon. Member (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) had urged that Poor Law duties should be handed over to the new County Concils, and had based some of his reasons upon the history of our Poor Law. It was a remarkably grotesque view of the history of the country to suggest that the gradual taking away of land from the people necessitated the passing of the Poor Law of Elizabeth, for the inclosure of commons occurred chiefly in the 18th century, and any such reconstruction of our Poor Law system as had just been recommended, with the expenditure it would involve, it would have been madness to couple with a measure for the creation of County Councils. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Epping Division of Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had protested against including any licensing proposals in the present Bill. Well, could he deny that if the Government had declined to deal with the Licensing Question, it would have been said that their Bill was hopelessly incomplete. As to the powers that were to be transferred from the Home Office, the Local Government Board, and the Board of Trade, many of them were of so thoroughly simple and local a character that it was obvious they could be better exercised on the spot by those who had local knowledge than by Departments in London. An hon. Member on the Ministerial side was very anxious that certain powers with regard to Private Bill legislation should be transferred to the new County Authorities; but although he believed that some steps could and ought to be taken by means of which the House would divest itself of powers which at the present time it could not adequately discharge, he did not believe it was possible to do it by transferring them to the County Councils. In various quarters, again, fears had been expressed that the urban element in many counties would altogether swamp the rural element. He fully admitted that if such were the case it would be a danger which it would be the duty of the Government to endeavour to meet; but he would like his hon. Friends to look for a moment at what was the nature of the urban sanitary districts. Many of them were exceedingly small, and if anybody looked into the history of the matter, he would find that in many cases they were so formed not merely because they wanted to exercise urban powers, or because they partook of an urban character, but simply in order to escape the rate which would be imposed on them by Highway Boards. He found that in 1881 there were no less than 22 urban districts with a population of less than 1,000, and four and five times that number with a population of less than 2,000. He would venture to say that others of these Rural Sanitary Boards, even containing a much larger population, were really and entirely rural in their interests. If he were to take instances of counties in connection with which the difficulty in question had been especially urged, he should take the counties of Devonshire and Kent, where there were a large number of urban sanitary authorities. But what was the nature of those urban sanitary districts? As was well known, they had simply been developed on the seaboard, consisting of watering places more or less large all along the coast; but would anybody be prepared to say that the character of their population was so distinctly urban as to have interests diametrically opposed to the interests of the rural population immediately adjoining. Or would one not rather say that they might safely trust their representatives on the County Councils to take, at least, as large and fair a view of their duties as any representatives would take in any other county? He was quite sure that when the question was examined in detail his hon. Friends would be satisfied that the alarm which they had felt did not rest upon substantial foundations. The best earnest of the desire of the Government not to endanger the old county policy was to be found in the plan by which they had dealt with proposals altering the boundaries of counties, and they hoped and believed that those boundaries would be dealt with in accordance with the general feeling of the whole inhabitants of the county. There had been a good deal of alarm, too, with regard to the borrowing powers contained in the Bill. He was one of those who looked with very great suspicion upon the borrowing powers as exercised in several cases by the boroughs, and he should so far agree with his hon. Friends that they ought to take warning by the lessons to be learnt from the boroughs. In this connection, however, there was one provision in the Bill which he believed would be of great value, and that was the provision enabling County Councils to borrow money for the purpose of lending it to Local Authorities within their own borders. If the restrictions provided by the Bill upon the borrowing powers of the County Authorities were not deemed sufficient to prevent those powers from being abused, he was sure that his right hon. Friend would be perfectly ready to consider any reasonable proposal for making those restrictions strong enough when the Bill reached the Committee stage. Another part of the measure that had given rise to some discussion was that which dealt with the control of the police. In referring to that matter he did not desire to touch the question of the control of the police in London—they were pretty well all agreed upon that. He was not afraid of touching that question, however, because the Government would have the strongest objection to hand over the control of the police of London to any Municipal Government of the Metropolis which might be established. But as regards the counties generally the question was a difficult one, and the Government were placed between two fires with regard to it. He could not disguise that the Government proposal was a compromise, and, like most other compromises, it did not appear to have succeeded in pleasing many hon. Members in that House, although that was no proof that the proposal was not the wisest solution of the question. The proposal of the Government, he believed, would meet reasonable objections on both sides, and they intended to earnestly press upon hon. Members in Committee the desirability of abiding by the compromise which had been arrived at after the most careful consideration. He desired to offer a few observations with regard to the very able speech which was delivered the other night by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), in which he dealt with the subject of public health. The right hon. Gentleman was, perhaps, the greatest authority in that House upon such a question as that, and it was with much diffidence that he ventured to criticize some of his observations. By the 45th section of the Bill the powers of existing Sanitary Authorities were transferred to the District Councils, while certain powers of the Local Government Board were transferred to the County Councils. The right hon. Gentleman complained that the Local Government Board would still retain the power of prescribing the duties of the medical officers of health, although the County Councils would have the power to make regulations with regard to their appointments and with regard to certain of their functions. The object of certain powers over the medical officers of health being retained by the Local Government Board was to insure uniformity of action throughout the country by means of general orders and instructions which could not be secured if the whole control were handed over to the different County Councils. The right hon. Gentleman had also complained that the medical officers of health were to make their Reports to the Local Government Board instead of to the County Councils; but there was no reason why copies of those Reports relating to their districts should not be furnished to the County Councils. If the Bill required amending upon this point, no objection would be raised on the part of the Government when the measure reached the Committee stage. The right hon. Gentleman had proposed a scheme dealing with large sanitary areas under which the number of officers of health would be reduced from 1,200 to 180, each of whom would receive £600 a-year. This, however, would leave 1,000 existing medical officers unprovided for; and he was afraid that the result would be to start the County Councils with an enormous expenditure, while many medical officers who had learnt their duties and had discharged them with great efficiency and industry would be deprived of their posts. He believed that a medical officer appointed by a Board would have, in many cases, more influence with them than any person imposed upon them from headquarters. He thought there were no other points of detail which it was necessary for him to dwell upon. It was, he thought, a very remarkable fact that now, on the fifth night of the debate, they had learnt for the first time that there was no intention on the part of any responsible portion of the House to challenge the second reading of the Bill. Its main principle had not been attacked. Its main principle was that of handing over certain large duties of county government to Bodies mainly based upon popular election. The Government were well aware that in endeavouring to apply that principle to any practical scheme of government for counties they were running the risk of offending many interests and of treading on the toes of almost everybody who was at the present time connected with local government, and of exciting the prejudices of large and important Bodies throughout the country. The Government were, however, much more than content with the reception which their proposals had met with; and the more those proposals were discussed the more satisfied the Government were that they would appear to be reasonable and judicious, and that between extreme partizans on one side or the other they had endeavoured to the utmost of their power to keep a fair and even balance.

Mr. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said, he thought it would be advantageous if, consistently with the main principle of the Bill, they could develop the public life of our country villages. Nothing was more important than to prevent villagers from crowding into our towns, and therefore it was desirable to make country people take more interest than they did at present in their village life. He did not wish to make the parish what was called a unit; but, while accepting the district as the unit, he thought there were purposes for which the parish organization was desirable, and, indeed, practically essential. He also thought that the existing Vestry was the obvious organization which could by simple and easy means be reformed. We could not avoid having some kind of parish organization, even according to the present Bill. At the present time, the initiative for bringing into operation the Free Libraries Act, the Lighting Act, and certain other Acts of Parliament was given to the Vestry. Why should the initiative power now existing be taken away from the Vestry and transferred to the District Council? Besides these permissive Acts, there were certain other matters which parishes and Vestries must become more connected with. For example, the Allotments Act had been referred to. The allotment managers were to be chosen by the parish in such manner as the Local Government Board should decide. What more obvious way was there than to elect them by the parish in Vestry assembled? A representative element was required in the administration of charitable trusts, and the Charity Commissioners were at present, he believed, formulating some plan which would introduce in certain cases representatives of parish Vestries. But what was greatly wanted was Vestry reform. What would be the objection to interesting parishioners, in certain matters affecting their own parish, by giving them a certain amount of control over such matters? In towns the Mayor often called together a town's meeting; but villages under the present system were much more stagnant, and would remain so until some reform was effected. The desired reform of the parish Vestry would not be so very difficult a matter. What was wanted was to enable a certain number of the ratepayers to summon a meeting; that such meeting should appoint its own chairman; that the principle of one vote and the ballot should be adopted, and some arrangement made for meeting in the village schoolroom, which was supported by public money. The Local Councils for parishes were to be composed of members of the District Council, and "certain others" not chosen by the parish but by the whole District Council. Why should not these others be chosen by the parish, and not by the District Council, which might have very little in common with the parish? The Vestries ought to be given some administrative power and some limited executive power, as in respect of allotments and charity matters, and also a fairly full power of deliberative action in relation to matters which specially concerned the parish. Many of the Government's own supporters in the rural districts were feeling strongly that something of this sort ought to be done. It would have very beneficial effects of a social and educational character if the different classes—the landlords, tenants, and labourers—were brought together to discuss matters in which they were all jointly interested.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, he thought there must be general agreement with the hon. Member in his desire that there should be a re-invigoration of village life; and if that was all the formidable looking Amendment of the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) meant, it was a pity that the House was not informed of it several days before. There was a portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) which met the arguments, so far as they had been displayed, by the hon. Member for the Rotherham Division of York (Mr. Acland). In a sentence of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman it would be found that he said that as soon as the boundaries and other matters were settled for the County Councils, then it was the wish of the Government that there should be a reform of Vestry Councils. He (Mr. Jesse Collings) could not help thinking that the conclusion of the hon. Member for Eye was a lame one with regard to his Amendment, which threatened the life of the Bill, which was intended to kill the Bill—[*Cries of* "No, no!"] No; then was the Amendment a joke? He thought the hon. Member would have to explain himself in many places. His Amendment against the Bill on its second reading, if it were carried, would certainly have killed the Bill, and that was why so much importance was attached to it, else it should not be moved at all.

An hon. Member: It has not been moved.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: No; but the House was led to believe it would be moved, and after five nights' debate the lame and impotent conclusion was arrived at that the Amendment meant no more than a slight alteration in parish Vestries. That, it appeared, was all it meant! He was inclined to think his right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) was mistaken—that the tail had not wagged the dog, but after sundry contortions the dog, with a great effort, had succeeded in moving the tail. That, he thought, was the explanation of why the Amendment was thrown up at a late hour. But the reason given was that it was for the convenience of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) stated, however, that the Government did not want any such consideration as was offered them; that it was no convenience to them; and, that being so, perhaps the hon. Member, or some of those who acted with him, would still move the Amendment, seeing that its object had not been secured, and the consideration shown had secured no acknowledgment from an ungrateful Government. But the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Eye Division meant something more than the reform of Vestries, else why all that was said about "wolves in sheep's clothing" and that labourers could not go to a distance to attend District Councils "any more than they could go to Timbuctoo?" The reform of Vestries would not cure the matter. He was surprised to hear the argument that labourers would be unable to avail themselves of the advantages conveyed in the Bill, because they could not go to the county town or the place where the District Council assembled to discuss matters in which their localicy was interested. It might be said, if that made the Bill worthless, that when the Imperial franchise was conferred on labourers it was still more worthless, for if a labourer was unable to go a few miles to attend the meetings of the elected body he certainly could not travel to Westminster. The whole argument was of an extraordinary character, and struck at the value of all representative arrangements. The references of the hon. Member for Eye were unfortunate. He mentioned the subject of water supply, and said no object more fitting for parish management could be singled out than the water supply.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON: I said especially in clay districts.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: But if the Bill were to deal with such distinctions as between clay and other districts, a Minister of Geology, or something of that kind, would be required. Another extraordinary statement was that the advances as payment for indoor pauperism were calculated to promote pauperism. This was an argument that might at once be disposed of. The average cost of the food of a pauper was from 2*s.* 1*d.* to 2*s.* 4*d.* per week; but that did not include all the expenses connected with paupers, which, he thought, would be nearer 8*d.* or 10*d.* than 4*d.* per day. The argument hon. Members were asked to support was that Boards of Guardians composed of men not more than ordinarily insane would, for the sake of getting a lot of fourpences, spend a lot of eightpences or tenpences. The argument was was not worth consideration. It was absurd to suppose that any representative Body would do anything of the kind. There was one remark of the hon. Member for the Faversham Division of Kent (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) that it was worth while to digest. He said that the Government, though pledged to a County Government scheme, were not pledged to a scheme such as they had placed before the House and the country. That was quite true, and so much the more credit to the Government in that they had not brought in a Bill just redeeming their pledge and no more; but they had sought to meet the exigencies of the case, and had prepared a Bill that all people who knew anything about Local Government in counties would admit accomplished its object well. The importance of the reform he estimated as equal, if not superior, to the reform in the Imperial franchise; it was of as much importance that the labourer in the rural population should have a vote for the control and management of his own local affairs as that he should have a vote for Imperial affairs, because it touched his domestic life, and had relation to affairs with which he was locally acquainted. It was impossible to give effect to any Act that might be passed for the benefit of rural districts, to re-invigorate local opinion and restore that life and interest so desirable, until a reform in the administration of County Government, in the direction of the Bill under discussion, was secured. The legislation of past years had been of the most haphazard and piecemeal character from the want of a good system of administration. No doubt, Quarter Sessions had done their work well; but they had not had much work to do. They were a non-elective Body; they had but little power of rating the county, and without more money they could not do more work. The consequence was that in any new legislation, no matter how good, new authorities and new areas were created, or the work was shunted on to the Sanitary Authority to carry out, with the result, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) said, of a chaos of rates, and a chaos, worse than all, in areas. This accounted for much of the backwardness and lethargy in the rural districts, and made this the most pressing question of the day. He congratulated the Government on the manner in which they had grappled with a question so full of peculiar difficulties. Traditions had to be upset—a difficult thing to do—strong sentimental opinions had to be overcome, and many time-honoured institutions had to be modified or overturned. All this was a work of especial difficulty to the present Government. He supposed he must not say a Tory Government—there was no Tory Party now—nor was there a Liberal Party either. He preferred, therefore, to let the credit of the case lie with the Unionist Government and its Liberal Unionist supporters, including his humble self, as against the ex-Liberal Party represented by those to whom he was opposed at the present time. The Government were to be congratulated, and were entitled to the gratitude of all who valued the welfare of the rural districts. The Government had dealt with the subject in a manner very few expected they would. He attended a meeting at which the hon. Member for the Eye Division and many of his friends were present, and he was ridiculed for giving expression to the bare possibility that the Government might bring in a decent County Government Bill. It was held to be certain that by means of *ex officio* members, or other methods—[An hon. MEMBER: Selected members.]—he would come to that presently—by some method the representative principle would be so leavened that what was given with one hand would be taken away with the other. By this means it was thought the Government would lose Liberal Unionist support, defeat would follow, a Gladstonian Government come in, and then the Universe would be set right. That expectation, he believed, was at the bottom of a good deal of the action in regard to the Bill. But all those fears, expectations, or hopes had been falsified. A sound, honest, decentralizing measure had been brought in, far-reaching, and even revolutionary, in its changes, yet on strictly Constitutional lines. There were not found in the Bill any *ex officio* Members, any plural votes or voting papers, no nominated members, and an end was put to the wasteful system of subventions—the whole management of affairs was in the hands of electors, women included. He was, therefore, not surprised at the chorus of approval with which the Bill had been received at first. He valued first expressions. Ejaculations, it was said, ascended straight away to Heaven, or where they were addressed. He was inclined to think that the first expressions from the Front Opposition Bench were the best thoughts before they were modified by other considerations. His right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) was justified in calling the measure large, comprehensive, and complete, and that was strong evidence to get over, and many arguments would be needed to explain them away and make the country believe that this large and comprehensive measure was a wolf in sheep's clothing. What was the principle of the Bill? It was the principle of establishing popular representative government in the counties, and that was to be carried out by an extension to the counties of the Municipal Corporations Act. Both principle and method were plain, and could be understood by everybody. It had been found impossible to attack the Bill on principle, and even the attack on details had had to be abandoned. The hon. Member for Nottingham said it was a Bill with a very fine superstructure, but a bad foundation; but the contrary was the fact, and whatever defects there might be in the superstructure, the foundation was absolutely good and could not be improved upon. Therefore, he found that, although the Bill could not be attacked for anything it professed to do, resort had to be had for what the Bill did not profess to do. But much manifestly would come later, and the passing of the Bill would make subsequent reforms much more easy. He accepted the Government's promise in reference to assessment and Poor Law reform, and there was plenty of time before 1893 to complete the measure and satisfy hon. Members on all points.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 207.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Sinclair.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was a short measure, the object of which was to remedy a defect that had arisen in the working of the 1st clause of the Act passed last Session. As the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had expressed his willingness to accept the measure, and as, he believed, it was agreed to by all sections of the Irish Members, he hoped the House would consent to read the Bill a second time. He would briefly explain its provisions. There were a great number of Ulster leases which contained covenants against assignment; but, notwithstanding these covenants, the leases had been assigned, and the landlords had accepted the tenants, taken rent from them, and had their names entered for the rent on the estate books. Now, however, when these tenants sought to go into Court as leaseholders, the law was enforced against them, and they were not allowed to rank as leaseholders under the Act. The Bill was intended to remove that defect in the law, and to allow them to go into Court as leaseholders.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said, the Government did not consider that this was a Bill which was intended to re-open any question settled by the legislation of last year. It merely provided for a certain number of cases in which there was what he might call a technical flaw in the tenant's title, when an assignment had been substantially acted upon, and accepted by the landlord. The Government saw no reason to oppose a Bill which simply removed a defect of that kind; and they, therefore, raised no objection to the second reading.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

FISHERY ACTS AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 32.]

(*Colonel Nolan, Mr. E. Harrington, Mr. P. M'Donald, Mr. Foley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.), in moving that the House should go into Committee on the Bill, said, that the measure was agreed to by the Government, and he intended to report Progress after an Amendment had been accepted.

Motion made, and Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," —(*Colonel Nolan,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Petition for prohibition of trawling, and proceedings thereon).

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): I beg to move, in page 1, to leave out lines 15 and 16.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, to leave out lines 15 and 16.—(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Colonel Nolan,*) —put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.—[Bill 61.]

(*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richard, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. William Abraham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he must appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) on behalf of the Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill, and another measure which was standing in the name of the hon. Baronet the Member for Exeter (Sir Stafford Northcote). The question of intermediate education in Wales had stood over since 1882. A Departmental Committee was appointed in 1883, and they arrived unanimously at a conclusion on the subject. There was not a Welsh Member, in whatever part of the House he might sit, who would not agree that these two Bills should be sent to a Select Committee, in the hope that some conclusion might be arrived at. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had said, the other day, that the Government hoped they would find time to bring in a Bill on the subject. He (Mr. Mundella) was afraid that, in the present state of Business in the House, there was very little chance of their being able to do so this year. He thought that a Select Committee would be able to come to some agreement. There was a disposition on the Opposition side of the House to do so. Whatever differences of opinion there might be with reference to intermediate education among the Welsh Members, they were quite prepared to thresh them out, and to come to some compromise, so as to get the question settled. That being so, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would allow the Bill to be read a second time, in order that it might be referred to a Committee Upstairs.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was because he fully appreciated the great importance of the subject that he could not consent to the second reading of the Bill after 12 o'clock at night without any discussion. He fully admitted the value of discussion by Select Committees, and a threshing out of details, such as the right hon. Gentleman opposite suggested, would be very useful.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the right hon. Gentleman objects to the further passage of the Bill, that disposes of it for this evening.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid, Sir, I must do so; and I hope that, under the circumstances, the House will realize that I do not take this course merely from a spirit of opposition.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (NEW CODE, 1888).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) in moving that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty on this subject, said, that his object in bringing forward the Resolution was to obtain the verdict of the House of Commons against changes in the Scotch Code, which militated against the success of two important branches of education, and placed the taxpayers of Scotland in an unjust and inequitable position in comparison with those of England. He would very briefly explain the effect of the changes to which he alluded. A grant of 4*s*. was made under the Code both in England and Scotland in respect of instruction in cookery. It was now proposed that in Scotland the number of pupils in a cookery class should not exceed 12, instead of 24, the former number allowed, and that if it did exceed 12 the grant could not be earned. The result of the change would be that in a number of schools in Scotland the teaching of cookery would be discontinued. There had been no demand for the change on the part of the school boards. He believed that two or three ladies who were members of Scotch school boards had come to London, and had an interview with the Scotch Department on the subject; but the lady member of the Glasgow School Board who spoke on that occasion did so as an individual, as the Glasgow School Board had never come to a resolution authorizing the alteration in the Code. He was informed that the alteration would not be in the interest of cookery. He held in his hand a letter from one of the most successful, if not the most successful, teacher of cookery in Scotland, Mrs. Black, and he would read an extract from it. Mrs. Black wrote—

> "The number of 12 is too small a class for any qualified teacher to superintend. It is waste of time. Masters cannot afford the room for so small a number, except where there is one expressly built, and in few country schools is that the case."

Mrs. Black went on to say that many country school boards took up the teaching of cookery, on account of the encouragement held out to them to do so by the old system, and that in the new condition of things they would have to give up the teaching of cookery altogether. That was his case in regard to cookery—namely, that the change in the Code would choke off the teaching of cookery as a subject in a number of Scotch rural schools, whilst in the larger towns it would simply increase the cost of the teaching, and would put the schools to more expense in earning the grant than schools were put to in England. The result would be to discourage the teaching of cookery in Scotland, so that whilst Scotland would be obliged to pay its full contribution towards the cost of such instruction, it would not receive the same benefit from it as England did. The point respecting the drawing grant lay, like the other, in a nutshell. In England, at the present moment, school managers were allowed to earn 17*s*. 6*d*. per scholar on average attendance. The grants paid for drawing were not included in that 17*s*. 6*d*., but were paid by the Science and Art Department. In Scotland, up to the present time, the same system had been pursued. It was now proposed to alter the system so as to include the grant for drawing in the 17*s*. 6*d*. The obvious effect of that change upon every school board earning the maximum grant must be to do away with all incentive to teaching drawing, and, therefore, to discourage the teaching of drawing. If the alteration were adhered to, the Scotch people would be taxed for providing grants for drawing in English schools, without receiving any reciprocal advantage themselves. Drawing lay at the very foundation of mechanical education, and, therefore, the change in the Code, by discouraging drawing in schools, would strike a heavy blow at technical education.

MR. SPEAKER: It may be for the convenience of the House that the hon. Gentleman's two propositions should be put together, but if any hon. Gentleman objects to their being taken together, they will be put separately.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from so much of the Code (1888) of the Scotch Education Department as imposes on the earning of grants for cookery a new restriction not imposed in the English Code:
>
> "And further praying Her Majesty to withhold Her assent from so much of the said Code, as contrary to the usage in England, includes grants for drawing in reckoning the total of 17*s*. 6*d*. per scholar in average attendance, to which the amount which may be earned by school managers is limited."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he did not complain for a moment of the hon. Member bringing these two subjects before the House, as they were both matters which were interesting to Scotland. He thought it would be more convenient that, if the hon. Member went to a Division, the two propositions should be taken separately, as some hon. Members who might favour one might be opposed to the other. The hon. Member stated that the new arrangements of which he complained would militate against the advantages of education in Scotland. He (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) was sure, however, the hon. Gentleman would agree with him that that was not the intention of the Department in making them. It was entirely a question of judgment on the part of the Department as to which was the better course to pursue. No doubt a number of people might be found who thought that the Department had exercised a wrong discretion in making the changes; but he was not afraid of referring the matter to the common sense of the House. It was pretty clear that a class of 24 young women, each of whom had to cook with her own hands, could not be conducted by a single teacher. The hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had brought forward the opinion of a lady who, no doubt, had had much experience in the matter, but the change with regard to cookery classes had been made on the representations of a deputation which represented the chief schools of cookery in Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Edinburgh School Board, and the Northern Union of England. The whole object of the deputation which waited upon Lord Lothian was to obtain the best results from the instruction given, by providing that the classes should consist of a suitable number, so that proper supervision should be given. The Code, as altered, provided that while the full grant of 4*s*. was to be given for a class taught for 40 hours, during 20 of which the student cooked with her own hand, the grant of 2*s*. was to be given for a course of a limited number of hours, in which the student cooked with her own hands. He thought that was the best arrangement that could be made, and that it should not be upset. He did not himself think that it would really reduce the amount of the grants, but, whether it did or not, the first thing to be considered was the efficiency of the work done, and if, as was the case, a large number of experienced people, who had no interest in the matter except that of seeing that the teaching was given in the best and most practical way, supported the alteration in the Code, it could hardly be contended that the Secretary for Scotland was wrong in making it. It would be a strong thing for the House to upset a decision of the kind, which had been come to solely in the interest of the teaching arrangements of the schools. As to the hon. Member's second proposition, it was not so easy a matter to deal with as the hon. Gentleman supposed, because the 17*s*. 6*d*. limit was laid down by law. It was a matter of law and not of Code, and could only be dealt with by the Treasury. He would, however, consider whether a communication should not be made to the Treasury on the subject, with the view of ascertaining if they could meet the hon. Member's views.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, he had taken considerable trouble to get information on the subject of cookery instruction from those who were capable of giving it; and, as a result of his inquiries, he had come to the same conclusion as the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron)—namely, that it was perfectly possible to give good and efficient instruction in practical cookery in classes containing as many as 24 students. In England, classes of 24 were allowed. Since his hon. Friend's Notice of Motion was placed on the Paper, he (Mr. Sinclair) had received a telegram from the Secretary of the Govan School Board, which was probably the largest in Scotland with the exception of that of Glasgow, informing him that the Board had posted a letter to the Department, asking that the article respecting cookery should be restored to the terms of that in last year's Code. The telegram also stated that it was understood that the Glasgow School Board was taking a similar course. He thought that the change had been made a little prematurely. There was no question that classes of 12 might be more effective than classes of 24, but that was not the only point that had to be considered. The change in the Code would prevent the spread of instruction in cookery in places where it was now given, and would prevent the establishment of cookery classes in places where they did not at present exist. He trusted, therefore, that the Lord Advocate would consent to the passing of the first part of the Resolution; but he thought his hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) might be content with the promise which the Lord Advocate had given on the subject of drawing instruction.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he had no doubt that if the cookery classes were reduced to 12 students, the work would be better done than if the students numbered as many as 24. He wished, however, to know whether it was a fact that the new restriction did not apply to the English Code. If so, why should Scotland be placed at a disadvantage on this point as compared with England?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: It is a fact that the change is not made in the English Code.

MR. MUNDELLA: What is the number allowed in England?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, it was 24. It must be remembered, however, that the change was really a reform.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he was very glad to hear of a reform in education in

Scotland. Scotland was always in advance of England in matters of education, and always obtained larger grants than England. He wished that England could be brought to the same position as Scotland in regard both to education and to grants. He doubted, however, whether it would be wise to introduce this change into Scotland before adopting it in England. As to the second part of the Resolution, when the Lord Advocate said it was a question of law and not of Code, all he (Mr. Mundella) could say was that, when he entered the Education Department in 1880, it was not then regarded as a matter of law. The grant had been paid since 1876, and it was continued to be paid until the time he left the Department.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): It is paid outside the 17*s.* 6*d.* limit.

MR. MUNDELLA: Well, it was always paid within the 17*s.* 6*d.* limit.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: Till last year.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he doubted whether there was a single Member on the other side of the House who did not feel that the change which was now being made would inflict hardship upon the Scotch schools, as it would compel many of them to abandon the teaching of drawing. Drawing lay at the root of all technical education, and he sincerely trusted that the Government would see their way to withdraw the proposed change. It was said to be a matter of law; but, if that were so, it would not be necessary to apply to the Treasury, and he thought that, after all, it was a mere matter of the Treasury rather than of the law.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) said, that in his opinion the restrictions proposed in the new Code would be very injurious to country districts. With regard to the question of the size of classes, he had heard only that evening that the classes in experimental chemistry in Edinburgh University were as a rule composed of from 30 to 40 persons.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, he thought that, as the proposed change was at variance with the English Code, the House should be very careful in sanctioning it. No doubt small classes might be of advantage in large cities, but he knew that in the country districts of Scotland the practice was to obtain teachers from Glasgow, and if the number of students in each class was restricted to 12 the result would be that in such districts it would be impossible to teach cookery at all. The Scotch Education Department had acted solely upon the information of parties representative of two cities, but who were not representative of the school boards of either Glasgow or Edinburgh, and it was now stated that the school boards of Glasgow and Govan were against the change. That being so, it would surely be unfair to press the alteration this year. Inasmuch as the proposal had not been considered by the people of Scotland, and had not been properly considered by the Government, he thought it would be a gracious act on the part of the Lord Advocate to postpone the application of the change until next year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he might prevent the necessity of further debate by saying that the Government had no objection to reconsider the proposal in the Code and postpone any alteration for another year. The Code might be amended by the issue of a new Minute laid on the Table. The course taken had been adopted under the impression that it was desired by those most interested, but it appeared, from what had been said by Scotch Representatives, that that was not the case, and therefore the Government would reconsider the question.

DR. CAMERON said, after this satisfactory statement, he would not press his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Broadford, Clevedon, Cromer, Curran, Hopeman, Millpoint, Saint Ives, and Southbourne, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 221.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the 27th day of March, 1888, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say) :—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles ..	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts ..	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCCXXIV.

Explanation of the Abbreviations.

Bills, Read 1°, 2° 3°, or 1^a, 2^a, 3^a, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches; 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—*1st. Div.*, *2nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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COTTON, Capt. E. T. D., *Cheshire, Wirral*
Agricultural Department of the Privy Council—Agricultural Education, 1328

County Courts Consolidation Bill [H.L.]
(*Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Read 2° *Mar* 26, 372 [Bill 173]
Referred to Standing Committee on Law, &c. *April* 5
Ordered, That the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] upon Monday, 23rd April, at half-past Eleven of the clock (*Mr. Osborne Morgan*) *April* 16

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cornwall, Bodmin*
Keble College, 3R. 1699
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1331, 1335, 1348, 1354, 1428, 1429, 1430
National Debt (Conversion), 3R. 66
Supply—Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 542, 553
Home Office, 667, 685, 692
House of Lords, 648
Houses of Parliament, 524
Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, &c. 642
Ways and Means, Comm. 830, 1673
Westminster Abbey, Comm. *cl.* 1, 366; *cl.* 3, *ib.*; *cl.* 7, 369

COX, Mr. J. R., *Clare, E.*
Ireland—Questions
Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Disturbances at Ennis—Conduct of the Military, 1314, 1320, 1321
Magistracy—Mr. Kilkelly, R.M. 263
Railways and Political Meetings, 1307

COZENS-HARDY, Mr. H. H., *Norfolk, N.*
Allotments Act, 1887—Compulsory Acquirements of Land on Leases, 1049
Keble College, 3R. 1695

CRAIG, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Local Government (England and Wales)—Licensing Clauses, 1737
Ways and Means, Comm. Motion for reporting Progress, 1673

CRANBROOK, Viscount (Lord President of the Council)
Agricultural and Dairy Schools, 15
High Sheriffs, Motion for a Select Committee, 19
Women's Suffrage, 2R. Amendt. 1177

CRAWFORD, Earl of
Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2), 2R. 1453

CRAWFORD, Mr. D., *Lanark, N.E.*
Admiralty Contracts — Tenders for Ironmongery and Cutlery, 1038
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 82
Scotland — Criminal Law — Discharge of Prisoners from Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, 698

Cremer, Mr. W. R., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*
Metropolis—Hackney Carriages—Licences and Tax upon Cabs and Omnibuses, 868
Supply—Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 544, 549, 551
Houses of Parliament, Amendt. 522, 528, 529
Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain, 565
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 514, 517

Crilly, Mr. D., *Mayo, N.*
Ireland—Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin, 246

Criminal Evidence Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 22, 68
After short debate, Amendt. to leave out from "That" add "it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners deprived of the protection of a jury" (*Mr. T. M. Healy*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); Question put; A. 160, N. 111; M. 49 (D. L. 50); Question put, "That the words, &c.;" A. 173, N. 119; M. 54
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 135
Main Question, "That the Bill be now read 2°," again proposed; after short debate, Question put; A. 231, N. 92; M. 139 (D. L. 52)
Bill read 2°, and committed [Bill 132]
Moved, "That this House will, upon 12th April, resolve itself into the said Committee" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 141
Amendt. to leave out "12th April," insert "3rd May" (*Mr. Dillon*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That '12th April,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 198, N. 130; M. 68 (D. L. 53); Main Question put, and agreed to
Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 16, 1330

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2) Bill
(*Dr. Clark, Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Mackintosh, Dr. M'Donald, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Lyell*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 17, 1590
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Mark Stewart*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 90, N. 126; M. 36 (D. L. 74)
Words added; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; Bill put off for six months [Bill 162]

Cross, Viscount (Secretary of State for India)
East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways), 2R. 1295, 1296

Crossley, Sir S., *Suffolk, Lowestoft*
Fishery Department (Board of Trade), Res. 891

Crossman, Major General Sir W., *Portsmouth*
Army (India)—Retired Indian Officers—Payment of Pensions, 1182
Local Government (England and Wales)—Clause 69, Sub-section 3, 1056

Crown Rents and Royalties
Coal and other Minerals, Questions, Mr. Caleb Wright, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Mar* 22, 39
Prerogative Rights to Precious Metals, Questions, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 19, 1728
Wales—Discovery of Gold—Rights of the Crown, Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 9, 718

Cruelty to Animals Act—Rabbit Coursing
Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 26, 261

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Resolution in Committee *Mar* 26
Resolution reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered * *Mar* 27
Read 1° * *April* 10 [Bill 202]

Customs Department — Examination for Outdoor Officers
Question, Mr. H. Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Mar* 27, 393

Customs, Isle of Man, Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*)
c. Considered in Committee *Mar* 22
Moved, "That, in lieu of the duties of Customs now charged on rum and on British and Irish spirits imported into the Isle of Man, there shall be charged the duties following (that is to say):— *s. d.*
Rum, including shrub, of the British Possessions, the gallon 8 6
British and Irish spirits, not otherwise exempted from the payment of duty, the gallon 8 6
(*Mr. Jackson*)

[*cont.*

Customs, Isle of Man, Bill—cont.
Objection taken; and, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress
Resolution in Committee *Mar* 23
Resolution reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 26 [Bill 195]
Read 2° * *Mar* 27
Committee *; Report *April* 6
Read 3° * *April* 12
l. Read 1ª * (*M. Salisbury*) *April* 13 (No. 60)

Cyprus—The Annual Tribute
Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton: Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) *Mar* 26, 260

Darling, Mr. C. J., *Deptford*
Financial Resolutions—Horse Tax, 855

Davenport, Mr. H. T., *Staffordshire, Leek*
Vagrant Act Amendment, 2R. 940

Deasy, Mr. J., *Mayo, W.*
Ireland—Appointment of Mr. Stoney, J.P., D.L., 401
Commissioners of National Education—New School at Castlemartyr, Co. Cork, 237, 238

De Cobain, Mr. E. S. W., *Belfast, E.*
Ireland—Disturbance at Ennis, 1104
Municipal Franchise (Belfast), 2R. 949, 952
Vauxhall Park, Instruction to the Committee, 1705
Wages (Ireland), 2R. 953, 956, 959

De La Warr, Earl
Copyhold Acts Amendment, 2R. 1294

Denman, Lord
Irish Fisheries, Res. 152, 154
Women's Suffrage, 2R. 1175, 1177

De Worms, Baron H. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
Africa (South)—Amatongaland—Concessions by the Queen Regent, 1326
Native Population of Natal, 258
Alaskan Fisheries Disputes—Seal Fisheries, 237
Cape of Good Hope—The Governorship, 391
Cyprus—The Annual Tribute, 261
Jamaica—Mr. Gibbons, late District Judge, 713
Merchandize Marks Act—British Colonies, 1729

Dickson, Major A. G., *Dover*
Prisons—Convict Prison at Dover, 459

Dillon, Mr. J., *Mayo, E.*
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 99, 140, 141; Amendt. 142
Egypt—New Egyptian Loan, 30, 31

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Dillon, Mr. J.—*cont.*
Ireland—Questions
Disturbances at Ennis, 1090
Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission, Co. Down—Fair Rents—Decision of Mr. E. Greer, Antrim, 185, 186, 1054, 1055, 1057
Law and Justice—Salaries of Divisional Magistrates, 55
Magistracy — Co. Clare—Mr. Hickson, Q.C., Temporary County Court Judge, 1193, 1194
Prison Regulations—Mr. John Roche, 1183
Rifles at Derrybeg Catholic Church, 1055
Royal Irish Constabulary—Extra Police in Co. Clare, 29, 30
Mr. Dillon and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Personal Explanation, 53

Dillwyn, Mr. L. L., *Swansea, Town*
Parliament—Adjournment, 432, 845
Arrangement of Public Business, 267
Parliament—Orders of the Day (Supply), Res. 1204
Public Offices — Admiralty Buildings—New Plans, 399
Smoa—King Malietoa, 847
Westminster Abbey, 2R. 148; Motion for Adjournment, 149

Dimsdale, Baron R., *Herts, Hitchin*
Local Government (England and Wales)—The Metropolitan Board of Works, 36

Diplomatic and Consular Service
A Consul at Nisch (*Turkey*), Question, Mr. Legh; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 9, 710
Monaco, Question, Colonel Hambro; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 12, 1035

Distress for Rent (Dublin) Bill
(*Mr. Murphy, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Captain M'Calmont, Mr. T. Harrington*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 17 [Bill 159]

Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Uxbridge District Cases — Windsor County Court, 718
Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.), 2R. 1466
Metropolitan Police—Service at the Houses of Parliament, 716
National Debt (Conversion)—Production of Stock Certificates, 245
Post Office (England and Wales)—Robbery at the Charterhouse Street Post Office, 1485
Theatres—Legislation—Fire at Oporto, 245

Dodds, Mr. J., *Stockton*
National Debt (Conversion), 3R. 55
Supply—Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 583; Motion for reporting Progress, 584

Dorington, Sir J. E., *Gloucester, Tewkesbury*
Local Government (England and Wales)—County Councils, 47

Douglas, Mr. A. Akers- (Patronage Secretary to the Treasury), *Kent, St. Augustine's*
Supply—Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 552, 553

Dugdale, Mr. J. S., *Warwickshire, Nuneaton*
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1231

Duncan, Colonel F., *Finsbury, Holborn*
Architects' Registration, 2R. 1552, 1560
Supply—British Museum Buildings, 632

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Kent, Dartford*
Education Department — Schemes of the Charity Commissioners under the Endowed Schools Acts, 176, 849
Education (Scotland) (New Code, 1888), Motion for an Address, 1831
Medical Act, 1886—Sec. 17—Qualified Medical Practitioners, 714
Technical Instruction, 1478

East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) Bill
(*Sir John Gorst, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Read 3^{o} * *Mar* 23 [Bill 143]
l. Read 1^{a} * (*V. Cross*) *Mar* 27 (No. 56)
Read 2^{a} * *April* 16, 1295
Committee *; Report *April* 17
Read 3^{a} * *April* 19

Ebrington, Viscount, *Devon, Tavistock*
Post Office—Parcel Post—Packages from South Africa, &c.—Distribution, 1184

Ecclesiastical Commissioners—Revenues of the Church of England in the Metropolitan Area
Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 19, 1710

Education (England and Wales)—Audit of Newcastle-on-Tyne School; and others
Question, Mr. James; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 9, 705

Egerton, Hon. A. de T., *Cheshire, Knutsford*
London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance, 39
Metropolis—Excessive Height of New Buildings at Albert Gate, 1316
Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.), 2R. 1463, 1470
Metropolitan Improvements—Bell Lane, Spitalfields, 704
Parks (Metropolis)—Battersea Park, Lake in, 34;—Dismissal of Workmen in, 1051

Egypt (*Questions*)
Egyptian General Assembly, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 12, 1038
The Daira Sanieh of the Khedive, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 10, 846

Finance
Stamp Duties on Foreigners—The Convention of 1885, Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Mar* 27, 384
The New Loan, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Mar* 22, 30; Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 9, 714

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Wigan, Earl of Crawford*)
l. Read 2^{a}, after short debate *April* 17, 1453 (No. 38)

Elementary Education Commission — Technical Education
Question, Mr. F. S. Powell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); Observation, Sir Bernhard Samuelson *Mar* 23, 188

Ellis, Mr. J. E., *Nottingham, Rushcliffe*
Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief, 2R. 985
Ireland—Questions
  Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Disturbances at Ennis—Mr. Shannon, 1711
  Irish Land Commission—Judicial Rents—Returns, 391;—Statistics, 240
  Irish Landowners "Printed Statement" of Grievances, 871
  Land Law Act, 1887—Notices, 241
  Land Purchase Act, 1885—Sale of the Marquess of Londonderry's Estates, 252
  Law and Justice—Judicial Discretion of Magistrates, 869, 870
  Magistracy—Return of Resident Magistrates (No. 89)—Captain O'Neill, Segrave, R.M. 1310
Keble College, 3R. 1694

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ELLIS, Mr. J. E.—*cont*
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1348
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1745
  Westminster Abbey, 2R. 232

ELLIS, Mr. T. E., *Merionethshire*
  Fishery Department (Board of Trade), Res. 908
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1243
  Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales), 2R. 1287
  Supply—Report, 841, 843

ELTON, Mr. C. I., *Somerset, Wellington*
  Financial Resolutions—Stamp Duties, 1728
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1766
  Ways and Means, Comm. 757

Employers' Liability Bill
  Question, Mr. Burt ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 23, 186

ESSLEMONT, Mr. P., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
  Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (Clark's Bequest, &c.), Motion for an Address, 1452
  Financial Statement—Definition of a "Pleasure Horse," 404
  Local Government (England and Wales)—
    Grant for Maintenance of the Indoor Poor, 1491
    Transfer of Existing Licences, 1720
  Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland), 397
  Scotch Fisheries, 253

EWART, Sir W., *Belfast, N.*
  Criminal Evidence, 2R. 121
  Wages (Ireland), 2R. 961

Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill
c. Resolutions in Committee *April* 9
  Resolutions reported *April* 10, 961 ; after short debate, Resolutions agreed to
  Ordered, That a Bill be brought in upon the Seventh Resolution, and that Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson do prepare and bring it in
  Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 27th day of March, and then agreed to by the House, That they do make provision therein pursuant to the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Resolutions
  Read 1° * *April* 12 [Bill 204]
  Question, Mr. Causton ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 17, 1495

EYRE, Colonel H., *Lincolnshire, Gainsborough*
  Financial Resolutions—Wheel Tax, 854
  Local Government (England and Wales)—Municipal Corporations Act, 1882—Section 12, 856
  War Office—Court Martial on Major Templer, 1724

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill
(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird*)
c. Read 2° *Mar* 26, 379 [Bill 154]
  Committee ; Report *April* 13, 1288

FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
  Copyright (Musical Compositions), Comm. *cl.* 6, 594
  Supply—Houses of Parliament, 522, 539
  Vagrant Act Amendment, 2R. 943
  Ways and Means—Financial Resolutions—Tax on Horses, 595

FELLOWES, Hon. A. E., *Huntingdonshire, Ramsey*
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1120

FENWICK, Mr. C., *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
  Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887—Conviction of G. A. Arnold at Wolverhampton, 863
  Ireland—English Deputation, 49
  Magistracy (England and Wales)—Alnwick Bench—Conviction for Stealing Jettisoned Timber, 179, 180, 864, 872, 876, 877, 878
  Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1582, 1584, 1587
  Wages (Ireland), 2R. 955

FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Manchester, N.E.*
  Africa (West Coast)—Questions
    Free State of Congo—Cruelties on the Natives, 1709
    French Protectorate over Senegal, &c. 37
    King Ja-Ja, 713
  Army (India)—Retired Indian Officers—Payment of Pensions, 1183
  China (Inland Navigation)—Yangtsze Kiang, 42
  Diplomatic and Consular Service—A Consul at Nisch (Turkey), 710
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  Egypt—Questions
    Daira Sanieh of the Khedive, 847
    Egyptian General Assembly, 1038
    Finance—Stamp Duties on Foreigners, 384
    New Egyptian Loan, 30, 31, 714
  Foreign Office—Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission to Teheran, 713
  Germany—Health of His Imperial Majesty, 1495

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  India—Questions
    Contagious Diseases Acts, 1193
    Finance, &c.—Budget Estimates, 852
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  Literature, Science, and Art—Public Galleries, Museums, &c. in Foreign Countries, 1723
  Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. 1663
  Morocco—Dispute with the United States, 458
  New Hebrides—Withdrawal of the French Troops, 387
  North Sea Fisheries Convention, 1883—Seizure of the Smack "Lady Godiva," 1744
  Samoa—King Malietoa, 847
  Spain—Firing on a Portuguese Lifeboat, 1048
  Supply—Report, 1172, 1174

FIELD, Admiral E., *Sussex, Eastbourne*
  Admiralty—Torpedo Net Defence Committee—Steel Booms, 709, 710
  India (Bombay)—New Dock, 1050
  Supply—Home Office, 689

Finance, &c.—Surpluses of Civil List Classes
  Questions, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 23, 189

FINLAY, Mr. R. B., *Inverness, &c.*
  Criminal Evidence, 2R. 77, 84
  Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (Clark's Bequest, &c.), Motion for an Address, 1447

FIRTH, Mr. J. F. B., *Dundee*
  Financial Resolutions—Wheel Tax, 722
  Law and Justice—Delays in the City of London Court, 50
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1746, 1763
  Local Government (England and Wales)—London County Council, 396
    Metropolitan Board of Works, 37
  London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance, 39
  Metropolitan Board of Works Commission, 2R. 378; Comm. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 405, 406; *cl.* 4, *ib.*

Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) Bill
  (*Colonel Nolan, Mr. E. Harrington, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Foley*)
  . Committee—R.P. *April* 19, 1824 [Bill 32]

Fishery Department (Board of Trade)
  Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Fishery Department of the Board of Trade as now constituted is not in accordance with the scheme by which the control of the fisheries was transferred to the Board of Trade, and in order to carry out that scheme and to secure the proper management and development of the fisheries of England and Wales, they should be placed under an authority comprising, in addition to the officials of the Board of Trade, persons with practical knowledge of the Sea and Inland Fisheries" (*Sir Edward Birkbeck*) *April* 10, 880; after debate, Motion withdrawn

Fishing in Rivers Bill
  (*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. Coleridge*)
  c. Read 2° * *April* 17 [Bill 152]

FLYNN, Mr. J. C., *Cork, N.*
  Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Disturbances at Ennis, 1061
    State of Ireland—Refusing to sell Bread to Emergency Men, 1484

FOLEY, Mr. P. J., *Galway, Connemara*
  Ireland—Post Office—Roundstone (Galway), 862, 1182

Food Supply
  Adulteration of Food Acts—American Refined Lard, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Mar* 23, 180
  Imports of American Bacon and Ham—The Merchandize Trade Marks Act, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 16, 1316
  Sale of Imported Meat, Question, Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (The Earl of Onslow); short debate thereon *Mar* 23, 157

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Secretary of State (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Under Secretary of State (*see* FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J.)

Foreign Office — Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission to Teheran
  Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 9, 713

Foreign States, Shipping Dues of
  Question, Sir George Baden-Powell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1063

Forestry—The Select Committee
  Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 26, 264

FOSTER, Sir B. W., *Derby, Ilkeston*
  Architects' Registration, 2R. 1553
  Education Department—Schemes of the Charity Commissioners under the Endowed School Acts, 175, 848
  Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1588
  Supply—Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 582
    Report, 695, 696
    Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain, 556, 566

Fowler, Right Hon. H. H., *Wolverhampton, E.*
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Hastings and Torquay Local Acts—Insertion of Clauses by the Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee, 1188, 1189
Inland Revenue—Amount received for Licences for the Sale of Spirits, &c. 1491, 1492
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Newport County Court—Insufficient and Defective Accommodation, 1472
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1147, 1156, 1159, 1160, 1438
Local Government (England and Wales), 1033; —Sections 18 and 20, 704, 705
Transfer of Existing Licences, 1720, 1721
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. 1651, 1658
Mortmain and Charitable Uses, 2R. 148
National Debt (Conversion), 3R. 64
Vagrant Act Amendment, 2R. 947
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 338, 345, 830

Fowler, Sir R. N., *London*
National Debt (Conversion), 3R. 65
Vagrant Act Amendment, 2R. 948

Fox, Dr. J. F., *King's Co., Tullamore*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—The Edenderry Union, 47

Fry, Mr. T., *Darlington*
Local Government (England and Wales)—"Compensation Clause," 1053
Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1566
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Fuller, Mr. G. P., *Wilts, Westbury*
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1782

Fulton, Mr. J. Forrest, *West Ham, N.*
General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen—Temporary Copyists, 1308
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1222

Gardner, Mr. H., *Essex, Saffron Walden*
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Gathorne-Hardy, Hon. A. E., *Sussex, East Grinstead*
Perpetual Pensions, Res. 221

Gathorne-Hardy, Hon. J. S., *Kent, Medway*
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Gedge, Mr. S., *Stockport*
National Debt (Conversion)—Redemption of Unconverted Stocks, 46
Supply — Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain, 566
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General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen — Temporary Copyists
Question, Mr. Forrest Fulton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 16, 1308

Gent-Davis, Mr. R., *Lambeth, Kennington*
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Germany
Death of His Imperial Majesty William I., Communication from the German Ambassador *April* 10, 846
Health of His Imperial Majesty Frederick III., Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 17, 1495; Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 19, 1744

Giles, Mr. A., *Southampton*
Architects' Registration, 2R. 1557

Gill, Mr. T. P., *Louth, S.*
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Architects' Registration, 2R. 1554
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Grievances of National Teachers, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 12, 1045; Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 17, 1493

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IRELAND—*National Education*—cont.

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Holyhead Harbour—The Platters Rock, Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 17, 1477

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)

Pier at Rosscarbery, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Mar* 26, 254

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The Barrow Drainage Works, Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1481

POOR LAW (IRELAND)

Election of Guardians for the Baltinglass Union, Questions, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 12, 1035;—*Mr. Douglas*, Questions, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 19, 1717

Ballinasloe Union — Surcharges, Questions, Mr. Harris, Mr. P. J. Power; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 19, 1713

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Parcel Post—Sunday Work, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 23, 178

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Post Office of Roundstone (Galway), Questions, Mr. Foley; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 10, 862; *April* 13, 1182

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Railways and Political Meetings, Questions, Mr. Cox; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 16, 1307

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Cork Winter Assizes—Refusal of Expenses, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Mar* 26, 239

Spring Assizes in Cavan, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 19, 1710

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Salaries of Divisional Magistrates—Legislation, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 22, 55

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Appointment of Mr. Stoney, J.P., D.L., Questions, Mr. Deasy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 27, 401

John Clarke and Wife, Prisoners in Sligo Gaol, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Under Secretary *Mar* 22, 24

Sentence on Dr. Magner, Question, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 12, 1040

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Co. Clare—Mr. Hickson, Q.C., Temporary County Court Judge, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *April* 13, 1193

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Removal of Dr. C. Ronayne, of Youghal, from the Commission of the Peace, Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1491

Return of Resident Magistrates (No. 89)—Captain O'Neill Segrave, R.M., Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 16, 1310

Waterford City—Assizes Commission—Omission of the Mayor, Questions, Mr. P. J. Power; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 19, 1708

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY

Alleged Outrage by a Police Constable at Portumna, Questions, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1475

Extra Police in Co. Clare, Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Under Secretary *Mar* 22, 29

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Prison Regulations—Galway Gaol—Mr. John Roche, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 13, 1183

Prison Regulations—Rule 24, Questions, Mr Murphy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for

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Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1482;—*Rule* 105, Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1483
Treatment of a Prisoner (Mr John Sweeny) in Galway Gaol, Questions, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 19, 1738

STATE OF IRELAND
Refusal to sell Bread to Emergency Men, Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *April* 17, 1484

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)
Murder of James Fitzmaurice, at Lixnaw, Co. Kerry—Norah Fitzmaurice, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 13, 1186;—*Reported Statement of the Hon. Mr. Justice O'Brien at the Wicklow Assizes*, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *April* 13, 1191; Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *April* 16, 1327
The Affray at Mitchelstown in September Last—Results of the Inquiry, Questions, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 16, 1322; Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1497

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The Returns, Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 27, 399

Ireland—Irish Fisheries
Moved to resolve, "That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty's Government" (*The Earl of Howth*) *Mar* 23, 151; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Ireland—Sunday Closing Acts
Moved, "That the Select Committee on Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland) do consist of Seventeen Members" (*Mr. Peter M'Donald*) *April* 10, 911; after short debate, Question put; A. 9, N. 173; M. 164 (D. L. 63)

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JENNINGS, Mr. L. J., *Stockport*
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Joint Stock Companies—Provident Association of London (Limited)
Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 17, 1480;—*Stamp Duty on Bonds*, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1319

Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies—Investments
Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 23, 188

KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Right Hon. Sir U. J., *Lancashire, Clitheroe*
Reformatories and Industrial Schools, 236

Keble College Bill [Lords] (by Order)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3°" (*Mr. J. G. Talbot*) *April* 19, 1687
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge should be extended to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church" (*Mr. Courtney Kenny*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 125, N. 127; M. 2 (D. L. 76)
Question proposed, "That those words be there added," 1701; Amendt. to proposed Amendt. in line 3, after "extended," insert "by a Private Bill" (*Mr. Courtney Kenny*); Question, "That those words be inserted in the proposed Amendt.," put, and agreed to
Question, "That the words 'it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act, enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, should be extended by a Private Bill to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,' be added after the word 'That' in the Main Question," put, and agreed to
Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

KELLY, Mr. J. R., *Camberwell, N.*
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KENNY, Mr. C. S., *York, W.R., Barnsle*
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KENYON, Hon. G. T., *Denbigh, &c.*
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LABOUCHERE, Mr. H., *Northampton*
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LAFONE, Mr. A., *Southwark, Bermondsey*
River Thames—Imports of Petroleum from Russia, 1317

LALOR, Mr. R., *Queen's Co., Leix*
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l. Read 2ª *Mar* 23, 168 (No. 40)

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Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 22, 52

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Amendment) Bill
(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Sinclair*)
c. Ordered; read 1º * *April* 12 [Bill 207]
Read 2º *April* 19, 1823

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) Bill
(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sinclair*)
c. Order for 2R. discharged; Bill withdrawn *Mar* 22, 149 [Bill 147]

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill
(*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman*)
Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 26, 267
Motion for Leave (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) *Mar* 26, 373; after short debate, it being Midnight, Debate stood adjourned
Debate resumed *Mar* 27, 407; after debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 199]

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Metropolis — Middlesex Sessions, Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 12, 1039

Newport County Court—Insufficient and Defective Accommodation, Question, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *April* 17, 1472
Suffolk County Courts, Question, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 13, 1182
Windsor County Court— Uxbridge District Cases, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *April* 9, 718

Sentences by County Courts of Quarter Sessions —A Return, Question, Mr. Powell-Williams; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 16, 1306; Question, Sir Richard Paget; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 19, 1723
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Alnwick Bench—Conviction of John Douglass and Joseph Wolfendale for stealing Jettisoned Timber, Questions, Mr. Fenwick; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 23, 179; *April* 10, 864; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Fenwick*), 872; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Appointments for the County of Wilts, Question, Sir Thomas Grove; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 16, 1328
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The Tredegar Club, Question, Mr. A. Thomas; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 16, 1312

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7 *& 8 Geo. IV., Cap.* 28—*Repeal of the "Whipping" Provisions*, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 6, 600

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(*The Lord Herschell*)
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(*Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Asquith*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 22 [Bill 188]

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Lewis, Mr. T. P., *Anglesey*
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Liability of Trustees Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Herschell*)
l. Select Committee nominated *April* 19; List of the Committee, 1676 (No. 24)

Licensing Laws, The—Clubs
Question, Mr. Addison; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 22, 35

Lighthouses and Lightships—Telegraphic Communication
Question, Sir George Baden-Powell; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 16, 1319

Limited Liability Law Amendment — Legislation
Question, Mr. J. M. Maclean; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 17, 1494

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Lyell, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Stewart, Dr. Clark, Mr. Munro-Ferguson, Mr. Thorburn*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 17 [Bill 106]

Literature, Science, and Art — Public Galleries, Museums, &c. in Foreign Countries
Questions, Mr. Lawson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 19, 1723

Livery Franchise (London) Abolition Bill
(*Mr. Firth, Mr. Causton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 13 [Bill 210]

Llewellyn, Mr. E. H., *Somerset, N.*
Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1567

Local Government
Corporations of England and Wales—Return, Question, Mr. Rowntree; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1736
Sewerage Works—Incidence of Cost, Question, Mr. Mowbray; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 6, 594

Local Government Board—Secretary to (*see* Long, Mr. W. H.)

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill
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Clause 15—Repair of Main Roads, Question, Mr. Leake; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1731
Clauses 18 and 20, Questions, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 9, 704
Clause 31—Coroners—Transfer of Powers, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1741
Clause 69—Sub-section 3, Question, Sir William Crossman; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1056
Cost of Contested Elections, Question, Mr. Caleb Wright; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 13, 1190; Question, Mr. Chaplin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1062
Encroachments on Waste and Common Lands, Question, Mr. Arthur Williams; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 17, 1483

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—cont.
Harbour Accommodation for Fishermen, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1041
Local Taxation—The Probate Duty, Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1727
Maintenance and Repair of Main Roads, Question, Mr. Leake; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 17, 1486; Question, Mr. Caleb Wright; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), 1488
Maintenance of the Indoor Poor—The Grant, Questions, Sir Tindal Robertson, Mr. Esslemont; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 17, 1490
Metropolitan Board of Works, Questions, Baron Dimsdale, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Firth; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 22, 36
Municipal Corporations Act, 1882—*Section* 12, Question, Colonel Eyre; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 10, 856
Office of High Sheriff, Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 26, 265
Revision of Valuation, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 5, 460
The Financial Proposals, Question, Mr. F. S. Powell; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 26, 236;—*Effect upon the Metropolis*, Question, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1723
The Toll Gate Tax, South Wales, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) *April* 16, 1297

The County Councils
Question, Sir John Dorington; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 22, 47
County Council for Liverpool—Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 13, 1179
Elective County Councillors—The County of London — Electoral Divisions, Questions, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1737; Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 27, 396; Question, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1041
Elective Councillors, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1050

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—The County Councils—cont.
The Franchise, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. W. Lowther; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1065
Town Councils of Boroughs, Question, Mr. Rathbone; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1733

The Licensing Clauses
Questions, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Craig, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1736
Licensing Divisions, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 17, 1487
Licensing Duties—Six-Day Licences, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 10, 854
Publicans' Licences, Question, Mr. Agg-Gardner; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) *April* 16, 1321
The "Compensation Clause," Question, Mr. T. Fry; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 12, 1053
Transfer of Existing Licences, Questions, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Childers, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 19, 1720

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]
(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 12, 1109; after long debate, it being Midnight, Debate stood adjourned
Debate resumed [Second Night] *April* 13, 1210; after long debate, Debate further adjourned
Debate resumed [Third Night] *April* 16, 1331; after long debate, Debate further adjourned
Debate resumed [Fourth Night] *April* 17, 1499; after long debate, Debate further adjourned
Debate resumed [Fifth Night] *April* 19, 1746; after long debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Bangor and Warrenpoint) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Balfour of Burley*)
l. Committee*; Report *April* 16
Read 3ª* *April* 17

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Coleraine, &c.) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*, for *The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Presented; read 1ª,* and referred to the Examiners *April* 13 (No. 63)

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 213]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 214]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 215]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 216]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 217]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 218]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 219]

London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance Bill
Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *Mar* 22, 39; Questions, Mr Baumann, Mr. Webster; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 27, 396

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Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—Parliamentary Under Secretary to the (*see* King-Harman, Right Hon. Colonel E. R.)

Lord President of the Council (*see* Cranbrook, Viscount)

Lord Privy Seal (*see* Cadogan, Earl)

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  Salmon Fisheries (Scotland), 154
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  Church Conservative Club Lottery, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 16, 1304
  William Street Reform Club, *Darwen*, Question, Mr. Byron Reed; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 23, 181
  Confectioners' Packets of Sweets, Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 12, 1036
  Drawing of Tickets on "Primrose Day," Questions, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 10, 865

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l. Read 3ª, after short debate *Mar* 23, 161
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- Limited Liability Law Amendment, 1494

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MALLOCK, Mr. R., *Devon, Torquay*
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Market Rights and Tolls—The Royal Commission
  Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 27, 397

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
(*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Charles Cameron, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. T. W. Russell.*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 18, 1605
  Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Salt*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 239, N. 182; M. 57
    Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1665
  Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 2]

Marriages of Nonconformists (Attendance of Registrars) (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Richard, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Waddy*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 12 [Bill 205]

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  Inland Revenue — Amount Received for Licences for the Sale of Spirits, &c. 1492

Mechanics' Institutes and Free Libraries—Supply of Blue Books
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Medical Act, 1886—*Sec.* 17—*Qualified Medical Practitioners*
Question, Mr. A. Morley; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *April* 9, 714

Merchandize Marks Act—The British Colonies
Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) *April* 19, 1729

Merchant Shipping Acts—Pilotage Certificates
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l. Read 2ª, after short debate *Mar* 22, 3 (No. 43)

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St. James's Park, Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *April* 17, 1488
[See title *Public Health*]

Metropolis Local Government Bill
(*Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Kimber, Major-General Goldsworthy, Mr. Baumann, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Hunt, Sir Guyer Hunter, Colonel Duncan*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *April* 5 [Bill 14]

Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 26 [Bill 194]
Read 2° * *April* 17

Metropolitan Board of Works Commission Bill
(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Stuart-Wortley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 23 [Bill 191]
Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 26, 378
Committee; Report; read 3° *Mar* 27, 405
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *April* 13 (No. 62)

Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.) Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Tatton Egerton*) *April* 17, 1463
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Dixon-Hartland*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 18, N. 144; M. 126 (D. L. 71)
Words added; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off for six months

Metropolitan Board of Works—The Royal Commission of Inquiry
Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 22, 53

Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 26 [Bill 193]
Read 2° * *April* 17

Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr Secretary Matthews*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 26 [Bill 192]
Read 2° * *April* 17

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. A. Gathorne-Hardy, Mr. M'Lagan*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 13 [Bill 209]

Metropolitan Police
Assaults by Constables — Patrick Sweeney, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 27, 387
Transfer of Constables of the A Division, Question, Colonel Waring; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 12, 1052

Police in Attendance on the Houses of Parliament, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 9, 716; Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 10, 868; Questions, Mr. Pickersgill, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir John Simon; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 12, 1058; Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 13, 1180; Question, Sir Julian Goldsmid; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 16, 1305

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 18 [Bill 212]

MILDMAY, Mr. F. B., *Devon, Totnes*
Financial Resolutions — Yeomanry Cavalry, 868

MILLTOWN, Earl of
Copyhold Acts Amendment, 2R. 1294
Sale of Imported Meat, 160

MILVAIN, Mr. T., *Durham*
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 79
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1534

MINTO, Earl of
Salmon Fisheries (Scotland), 154
Tweed Fisheries Acts, Motion for Papers, 155

MONTAGU, Mr. S., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*
Metropolitan Improvements — Bell Lane, Spitalfields, 703

MORE, Mr. R. J., *Shropshire, Ludlow*
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 343

MORGAN, Mr. O. V., *Battersea*
Excise — Duties on Retail Houses in the Metropolitan Area, 1722
Inland Revenue (Excise) Department—Appointments, 1305
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. 1646
Merchant Shipping Acts—Pilotage Certificates, 387
Parks (Metropolis)—Battersea Park, Lake in, 34;—Dismissal of Workmen, 1051

MORLEY, Right Hon. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief, 2R. 1021
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 95, 140, 142
Ireland—Questions
  Crime and Outrage—Affray at Mitchelstown in September last—Results of the Inquiry, 1322, 1323
  Disturbances at Ennis, 1088, 1104
  Evictions—The Returns, 399
  Irish Land Commission—Sale of a Boycotted Farm, 394, 395
Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), Motion for Leave, 427
Local Government (England and Wales), 1032
Magistracy (England and Wales)—Alnwick Bench—Conviction for Stealing Jettisoned Timber, 878
Parliament—Business of the House—Land Law (Ireland), &c. 1198

MORLEY, Mr. A., *Nottingham, E.*
Medical Act, 1886—Sec. 17—Qualified Medical Practitioners, 714

Morocco—Dispute with the United States
Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 5, 458

Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill [H.L.]
(*Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 22, 147
Committed to Standing Committee on Law, &c. *April* 13 [Bill 174]

Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) Bill [Bill 129]
(*Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Bowen Rowlands*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 13, 1286; after short debate, it being Midnight, Debate stood adjourned

Moveable Abodes Bill
(*Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Hozier*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 6 [Bill 200]

Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir J. R., *Oxford University*
- Committee of Selection (Standing Committees) (Special Report), 171, 172
- Keble College, 3R. 1696
- Westminster Abbey, 2R. 234

Mowbray, Mr. R. G. C., *Lancashire, Prestwich*
- Board of Inland Revenue—Contracts with De La Rue & Co. 187
- Local Government—Sewerage Works—Incidence of Cost, 594

Mulholland, Mr. H. L., *Londonderry, N.*
- Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief, 2R. 974
- Ireland—Land Purchase Act, 1885—Loans, 174

Mundella, Right Hon. A. J., *Sheffield, Brightside*
- Education (Scotland) (New Code, 1888), Motion for an Address, 1830, 1831
- Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (Bell Residue Bequest), Motion for an Address, 928, 929
- Financial Resolutions—Horse and Wheel Tax, 1190
- Fishery Department (Board of Trade), Res. 898, 911
- Intermediate Education (Wales), 2R. 1031, 1673, 1825
- Ireland—Land Purchase Act, 1885—Loans, 174
- Parliament—Adjournment, 456
  - Business of the House, 460
- Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1570, 1580
- Supply—Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 543, 545, 547, 549, 550, 553
  - House of Lords, 653
  - Houses of Parliament, 534, 535
  - Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 577, 581, 585
  - Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, 643
  - Science and Art Department Buildings, 592, 620, 623, 624, 626, 631
  - Surveys of the United Kingdom, 591
- Ways and Means—Report, 961 ; Comm. 1671

Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill
(*Mr. De. Cobain, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Fenwick*)

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 10, 949
- Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Sir James Corry*) ; Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c. ;" after short debate, Question put ; A. 80, N. 162 ; M. 82 (D. L. 64)
- Words added ; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to ; 2R. put off for six months Bill 138]

Municipal Tolls on Grain—Corporation of Guildford
- Question, Mr. Howard Vincent ; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Mar* 22, 20

Murphy, Mr. W. M., *Dublin, St. Patrick's*
- Architects' Registration, 2R. 1554
- Ireland—Questions
  - Inland Navigation and Drainage—Barrow Drainage Works, 1481
  - Land Improvements, 1492, 1493
  - Prison Regulations—Rule 24, 1482, 1483 ; —Rule 105, 1483

National Debt (Conversion) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson*)

c. Order for 3R. (Queen's Consent and Prince of Wales' Consent, as Duke of Cornwall, signified)
- Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3°" *Mar* 22, 55
- Amendt. to leave out "now read 3°," add "re-committed in respect of a New Clause" (*Mr. Anderson*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c. ;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
- Main Question put ; Bill read 3°, and passed [Bill 164]

l. Read 1^a* (*M. of Salisbury*) *Mar* 22 (No. 49)
- Read 2^a ; Committee negatived ; read 3^a *Mar* 23, 150
- Royal Assent *Mar* 27 [51 *Vict.* c. 2]

National Debt (Conversion) Bill
- Question, The Earl of Harrowby ; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) *Mar* 23, 169
- *Charitable Funds — The Charity Commissioners*, Question, Mr. F. S. Powell ; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 10, 863
- *Clause 27 — Trusts (Scotland) Act*, 1884, Question, Mr. Buchanan ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1035 ; Questions, Mr. Buchanan ; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 13, 1194
- *National Stocks — Statistics of Conversion*, Question, Mr. Mac Innes ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1309
- *Production of Stock Certificates*, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 26, 245
- *Progress of the Conversion*, Questions, Sir Richard Temple, Sir George Campbell ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1066 ; Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 13, 1197
- *Redemption of Unconverted Stocks*, Questions, Mr. Sydney Gedge ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 22, 46
- *Small Annuitants*, Question, Mr. Wootton Isaacson ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 22, 27
- *Small Holders*, Question, Mr. F. S. Powell ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 22, 41

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National Debt (*Conversion*) *Bill*—cont.
Trustees
Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 9, 712
Assent of Trustees, Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 27, 395
Charity Trustees, Question, Mr. F. S. Powell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 26, 247
Trustees of Marriage Settlements, Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 23, 183
Trustee Savings Banks Interest Account, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1314

NAVY (*Questions*)
Admiralty Contracts—Tenders for Ironmongery and Cutlery, Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 12, 1038
Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Marines, Question, Mr. P. Stanhope; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 12, 1066
Director of Naval Construction, Questions, Sir William Plowden; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 10, 857
H.M.S. "Buzzard," Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 19, 1730
H.M.S. "Hero," Question, Mr. Leatham Bright; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 22, 34
H.M.S. "Wasp," Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 26, 248
Naval and Military Systems—The Royal Commission, Questions, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 16, 1329
St. Saviour's Church, Dartmouth, Question, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 13, 1197
Torpedo Net Defence Committee—Steel Booms, Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 9, 709

The Dockyards
Dockyard Expenditure and Accounts, Question, Sir William Plowden; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 9, 716
Sheerness Dockyard—Discharge of Workmen, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 26, 255

NEVILLE, Mr. R., *Liverpool, Exchange*
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 126

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*
Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland), Comm. Motion for Adjournment, 1824; *cl.* 1, Motion for reporting Progress, *ib.*

[*cont.*

NOLAN, Colonel J. P.—*cont.*
Ireland—Questions
Destitution in Arran, 185
Public Works — Breakwater at Mutton Island, Co. Galway — Employment of Convicts, 1494
Public Works and Industries (Special Grant), 265
Railways and Deep Sea Fishery Harbours, 190, 1067
Police (Houses of Parliament)—Attendance at the House, 1060
Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment, 1443
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 297, 301, 329, 332, 333, 335, 336, 343

NOLAN, Mr. J., *Louth, N.*
Supply—Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, &c. 642; Amendt. 643

NORTHCOTE, Hon. Sir H. S., *Exeter*
Ways and Means, Comm. 803

North Sea Fisheries—Abrogation of the Anglo-French Fisheries Convention, 1839 *and* 1867
Question, Mr. Sinclair; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 19, 1717

North Sea Fisheries Convention, 1883—*Seizure of the Smack "Lady Godiva"*
Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 19, 1744

NORTON, Lord
Agricultural and Dairy Schools, 11

NORTON, Mr. R., *Kent, Tunbridge*
Agricultural Department of the Privy Council, 1492

O'BRIEN, Mr. J. F. X., *Mayo, S.*
Parliament—Adjournment, 457

O'BRIEN, Mr. P., *Monaghan, N.*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission in Monaghan, 26

O'BRIEN, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary, N.*
Ireland—Inquest on John Madden, an Inmate of the Cranna Orphanage, near Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, 1324
Local Government — Payments to Road Contractors, Tipperary, N.R. 40, 41

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Cork Co., N.E.*
Ireland—Disturbance at Ennis, 1080, 1082, 1095

O'Connor, Mr. A., *Donegal, E.*
Army Act, 1881—Requisitions of Emergency—Impressment of Horses, Carts, &c. 242, 243, 244
Civil Servants and Political Associations, 51
Copyright (Musical Compositions), Comm. *cl.* 6, 593
County Elections—Returning Officers—Fees to Sheriffs and Under Sheriffs, 1721, 1722
Ireland—Questions
Crime and Outrage — Murder of James Fitzmaurice at Lixnaw, Co. Kerry—Reported Statement of the Hon. Mr. Justice O'Brien at the Wicklow Assizes, 1327
Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Disturbances in Kilrush—Trial of Prisoners—Mr. Irwin, R.M. 724 ;—Ennis Inquiry—Deposition of Police Constable Watson, 1735
Local Taxation—Grants in Aid, 177
National Education—National Teachers, 1045, 1493
Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), Motion for Leave, 423
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. 1660
Perpetual Pensions, 215
Post Office—Central Telegraph Office—Vacancies, 1194
Royalties—Coal and other Minerals, 39
Supply—Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade, 635
House of Commons Offices, 657
House of Lords, 654, 655
Marlborough House, 494
Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 583
Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, &c. 636, 637, 639 ; Amendt. 640, 641
Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain, 571, 574
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O'Connor, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Disturbances in Kilrush—Trial of Prisoners—Mr. Irwin, R.M. 859, 861
Local Government, 872
Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland), Select Committee, 913

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Disturbances in Kilrush—Trial of Prisoners—Mr. Irwin, R.M. 721, 724
Irish Land Commission—Wexford Union, 191
Law and Justice—Cork Winter Assizes—Refusal of Expenses, 239
Local Government (England and Wales), 1033
Parliament—Adjournment, 434, 453
Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [Salary, &c.], Report, 726, 729

O'Connor, Mr. T. P.—*cont.*
Pharmacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 697
Supply—Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 548, 551, 552
Home Office, 690, 692
House of Lords, Amendt. 646, 648, 652, 653, 654 ; Amendt. 656
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Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Motion for reporting Progress, 693

Onslow, Earl of (Secretary to the Board of Trade)
Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2), 2R. 1459
Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), 2R. 3, 11
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Saving Life at Sea—Use of Oil for Calming Rough Seas, 1296

Paget, Sir R. H., *Somerset, Wells*
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Sentences at Quarter Sessions, 1723
Ways and Means, Comm. 769

Parker, Mr. C. S., *Perth*
Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (Bell Residue Bequest), Motion for an Address, 925
Keble College, 3R. 1694

Parliament
LORDS—
Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills
Ordered, That Standing Orders No. 92 and 93 be suspended ; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess *Mar* 23

Sittings and Adjournment of the House
The Easter Recess—The Hosue adjourned on Tuesday 27th March till Friday 13th April

Parliament—House of Lords
Moved, " That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission to inquire and report upon the question whether a revision of the Standing Orders in the House of Lords, or other changes with regard to it, might be so framed as to add to its efficiency " (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) *April* 19, 1676 ; after short debate, on Question ? resolved in the negative

[*cont.*

Parliament—Private Bill Legislation

Committee nominated *Mar* 22; List of the Committee, 19

Ordered, That such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the Commons in the appointment of a Chairman

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have directed the Select Committee appointed by them to join with a Committee of this House to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation to meet the Committee appointed by their Lordships in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, To-morrow at half-past Three of the clock

Ordered, That the Committee appointed by this House do meet the Committee appointed by the Commons in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, To-morrow at half-past Three of the clock *April* 19

COMMONS—

Mr. Conybeare, Personal Explanation, Mr. Conybeare; Observations, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 10, 879

Mr. Dillon and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Personal Explanation, Mr. Dillon; Observations, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Mar* 22, 54

Admission of Strangers to this House

Select Committee nominated *Mar* 27; List of the Committee, 432

Commons

Select Committee appointed and nominated *Mar* 27; List of the Committee, 431

Committee of Selection (*Standing Committees*) (*Special Report*)

Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade *Mar* 23, 171

List of Members added to Standing Committee on Law *April* 13, 1290

Standing Committees (*Chairman's Panel*)

Mr. Osborne Morgan to be Chairman of the Standing Committee on Law *April* 9, 845

Private Bills

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday 5th April (*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) *Mar* 27

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

The Easter Recess

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday 5th April" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Mar* 27, 432; after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); Question put; A. 145, N. 51; M. 94 (D. L. 54); Question, "That this House, &c." put, and agreed to

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Sittings and Adjournment of the House*—cont.

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Jackson*) *April* 9, 845; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Questions, Mr. Childers, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Channing, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 26, 267; Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 5, 460; Question, Mr. Wallace; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 9, 724; Notice, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Mr. Hunter; Answers, Mr. W. H. Smith *April* 19, 1745; —*Local Government* (*England and Wales*) *Bill*, Question, Mr. Whitmore; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 10, 869;—*Employers' Liability Bill*, Questions, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 13, 1195;—*Criminal Evidence Bill*, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 13, 1198;—*Land Law* (*Ireland*) (*Land Commission*) *Bill*, Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 13, 1198

Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day

Supply, Moved, "That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Fridays, be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the Second Reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *April* 13, 1199; after debate, Question put; A. 243, N. 143; M. 100 (D.L. 69)

House of Commons—Members' Places, Question, Mr. H. Gardner; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 22, 50

Parliament — New Rules of Procedure (1882)

Rule 1 (*Sittings of the House*)

Opposed Business, Questions, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 13, 1196

Rule 2 (*Adjournment of the House*)

Matter, The Magistracy (*England and Wales*) *—The Alnwick Bench—Conviction of John Douglass and Joseph Wolfendale for stealing Jettisoned Timber*

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Fenwick*) *April* 10, 872; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

[*cont.*

Parliament—New Rules of Procedure (1882) —cont.

Matter, The Disturbance at Ennis

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Parnell*) *April* 12, 1068; after debate, Question put; A. 179, N. 249; M. 70
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1106

Parliament — Palace of Westminster— Seats in this House

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 23, to leave out from "That," add "a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked 'Committee,' which shall be delivered to such Member on his application" (*Mr. Herbert Gardner*), 227; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived; words added

Parliament—Private Bill Legislation

Select Committee nominated *Mar* 26; List of the Committee, 380
Ordered, That so much of the Lords Message as proposes the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Private Bill Legislation be now considered
Lords Message considered accordingly
Ordered, That the Select Committee appointed to join with the Committee of the Lords to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified, with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of Costs and Charges, do meet in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock
Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath directed the said Committee to meet in Room 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock
Ordered, That the Committee have power to agree in the appointment of a Chairman; That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; That three be the quorum *April* 17

Parliament — Privilege — Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887

Arrest of Members

Mr. Gilhooly; Letter received by Mr. Speaker *April* 5, 457
Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Letters received by Mr. Speaker *Mar* 26, 235; *April* 12, 1034
Mr. W. O'Brien, M.P.; Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 16, 1330; Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1497; Letter received by Mr. Speaker *April* 18, 1604
Mr. Dillon; Letter received by Mr. Speaker *April* 19, 1706

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

New Peer

April 17—William Henry Lord de Ramsey—introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July, 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

April 10—*For* Limerick Borough, *v.* Henry Joseph Gill, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds
April 16—*For* Lanark (Mid Division), *v.* Stephen Mason, esquire, Manor of Northstead

New Members Sworn

Mar 22 — Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby, *County of Leicester* (*Eastern or Melton Division*)
April 5—David Randell, esquire, *County of Glamorgan* (*Western or Gower Division*)

Parliamentary Elections — County Elections — Returning Officers' Fees to Sheriffs and Under Sheriffs

Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 19, 1721

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill
(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson*)

c. Resolutions reported *April* 9, 725
Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution" (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*); Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*); after short debate, Question put; A. 104, N. 169; M. 65 (D. L. 61)
Original Question again proposed, 729; after short debate, Original Question put; A. 184, N. 109; M. 75 (D. L. 62)
Second Resolution agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1º* [Bill 201]

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*

Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief, 2R. 1022, 1023, 1024, 1026
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 135, 138, 146
Ireland—Disturbances at Ennis, 1060, 1061; Motion for Adjournment, 1068, 1069, 1076, 1077, 1080, 1105
Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), Motion for Leave, 377

Partnership Bill
(*Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Seale-Hayne*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 12 [Bill 206]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 17, 1603
It being One of the clock A.M., the Debate stood adjourned

Patent Laws Amendment
Question, Sir Henry Roscoe; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 13, 1187

PAULTON, Mr. J. M., *Durham, Bishop Auckland*
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1376

PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, Barnard Castle*
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1387
Parliament—Adjournment, 455
Parliament—Orders of the Day (Supply), Res. 1203
Ways and Means — Financial Statement, Comm. 325, 326

PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

Perpetual Pensions
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 23, to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system" (*Mr. Bradlaugh*), 193; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system (*Mr. Bradlaugh*), 218; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived; words added

Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
c. Read 1° * (*Dr. Farquharson*) *Mar* 26 [Bill 196]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 6, 697; after short debate, [House counted out]

PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
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Local Government (England and Wales) 2R. 1254, 1259
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Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 501, 512, 516, 518
Vagrant Act Amendment, 2R. 944
Ways and Means, Comm. 832, 833
Ways and Means—Financial Resolutions—Carts and Wheels, 597

PICTON, Mr. J. A., *Leicester*
Financial Resolutions—Tax on Male Servants—Exemption, 1719
Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 504
Ways and Means—Financial Resolutions—Licences for Agricultural Carts and Waggons, 598, 1192
Ways and Means — Financial Statement, Comm. 340, 748
Westminster Abbey, Comm. *cl.* 3, 366, 368

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 19 [Bill 221]

Pilotage
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PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Leeds, S.*
Architects' Registration, 2R. 1560
Fishery Department (Board of Trade), Res. 905
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1265
Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, 225

PLOWDEN, Sir W. C., *Wolverhampton, W.*
Admiralty—Director of Naval Construction, 857
Dockyard Expenditure and Accounts, 716
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PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R. (First Commissioner of Works), *Dublin University*
Ireland—Post Office—Postal Accommodation at Carlow, 1489
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Newport County Court—Insufficient and Defective Accommodation, 1473

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PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R.—*cont.*
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Rates for Re-posted Australian and Colonial Newspapers, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 26, 249
Carriage on Railway-borne Parcels, Question, Mr. Childers; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 27, 384
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  Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *Mar* 27, 399

Queen Anne's Bounty Bill
(*Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Kerans*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 17 [Bill 211]

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c. Bill withdrawn * *Mar* 22 [Bill 84]

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Rathbone, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire, Arfon*
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Unloading Rubbish in the Estuary, Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 10, 856

Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment Bill
(*Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Craig Sellar, Sir Archibald Campbell*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 22 [Bill 189]
  Read 2° * *April* 9
  Committee *; Report; read 3° *April* 16
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Camperdown*) *April* 17 (No. 68)

Robertson, Sir W. Tindal, *Brighton*
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ROSCOE, Sir H. E., *Manchester, S.*
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- Financial Resolutions—Licences for Agricultural Carts and Waggons, 598
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- Ecclesiastical Commissioners — Revenues of the Church of England in the Metropolitan Area, 1710
- National Debt (Conversion) Act — Trustee Savings Banks Interest Account, 1314
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- Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 16, 1321

RUSSELL, Sir C., *Hackney, S.*
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RUSSELL, Mr. T. W., *Tyrone, S.*
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  - Crime and Outrage—Murder of James Fitzmaurice at Lixnaw, Co. Kerry—Norah Fitzmaurice, 1186
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- Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 19, 1708

Salmon Fisheries (*Scotland*) *Bill*
- Question, The Earl of Minto; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (The Marquess of Lothian) *Mar* 23, 154

SALT, Mr. T., *Stafford*
- Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2), 2R. 1591
- Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. Amendt. 1611, 1621, 1627
- Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1586

SAMUELSON, Sir B., *Oxfordshire, Banbury*
- Elementary Education Commission—Technical Education, 188

Saving of Life at Sea (*Use of Oil for calming Rough Seas*)
- Moved for, 1. "Copy of any report or memorandum of the Board of Trade calling attention to a memorandum issued by the Board of Admiralty on the use of oil at sea for modifying the effects of breaking waves
  2. Copy of Circular Letter of the Admiralty, of 1st December, 1884, No. 3,206-8,305
  3. Copy of a Report of Captain Chetwynd, R.N., to the Committee of the Royal and National Lifeboat Institution, 30th Septem-

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Saving of Life at Sea (*Use of Oil for calming Rough Seas*)—cont.
ber, 1884, referred to in those reports" (*The Lord Cottesloe*) *April* 16, 1296
Motion agreed to; Returns ordered to be laid before the House

SCHWANN, Mr. C. E., *Manchester, N.*
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Burial Acts (*Scotland*)—*Private Cemeteries Companies*, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 19, 1714
Destitution in the Highlands, Question, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 9, 717
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Register House, Edinburgh—Right of Inspection, Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 12, 1042
The Highlands—The Free Church Conference at Dingwall, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson) *Mar* 26, 256
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Assignment of Additional Land to Highland Crofters, Questions, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh, Sir George Trevelyan; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 16, 1300
Reduction of Rents, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 17, 1490
Sitting at Gairloch, Question, Dr. R. Macdonald; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 17, 1480

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)
Clydebank School, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 19, 1712
Constitution, Questions, Mr. Caldwell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 19, 1743
Education Schemes, Questions, Mr. Caldwell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 19, 1742

Education Code, 1888, Questions, Mr. Sinclair; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 26, 266; *Mar* 27, 404
Article 21—*Grants for Cookery*, Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Sinclair; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 10, 866; Question, Mr. Sinclair; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 12, 1046

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Applecross Bay, Question, Dr. R. Macdonald; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 10, 847; Questions, Dr. R. Macdonald, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 17, 1473
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Mussel Beds, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 16, 1303; *April* 19, 1739
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Sheriff Principal of Lanarkshire, Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 19, 1716

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Edinburgh Post Office—Appointments, Question, Mr. Wallace; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 16, 1301

The Lewis Telegraph Cable, Question, Dr. R. Macdonald; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 10, 848

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Acceleration of Mails to the North of Scotland, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 22, 28

Caithness Mails, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 16, 1308

Contracts—The Morning Mail to the North, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 13, 1189

Shetland Mail Service, Questions, Mr. Lyell; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 27, 382; *April* 13, 1180

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First Class Prisons—Salaries of Principal Chaplains, Questions, Mr. Craig Sellar, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson) *Mar* 26, 251

Scotland—Education (New Code, 1888)

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from so much of the Code (1888) of the Scotch Education Department as imposes on the earning of grants for cookery a new restriction not imposed in the English Code

[*cont.*

Scotland—Education (New Code, 1888)—cont.

"And further praying Her Majesty to withhold Her assent from so much of the said Code as, contrary to the usage in England, includes grants for drawing in reckoning the total of 17*s.* 6*d.* per scholar in average attendance, to which the amount which may be earned by school managers is limited" (*Dr. Cameron*) *April* 19, 1826; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Scotland—Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (*Bell Residue Bequest*)

Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 9, 719

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the Scheme for the Management of the Endowment known as the Bell Residue Fund, now lying upon the Table of the House" (*Mr. Caldwell*) *April* 10, 915; after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Scotland—Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (*Clark's Bequest, &c.*)

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the Scheme for the Management of the Endowments in the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity and county of Inverness, known as Clark's Bequest, and the Nairnside School, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act) now lying upon the Table of the House" (*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh*) *April* 16, 1445; after short debate, Question put; A. 35, N. 93; M. 58 (D. L. 70)

Scotland—Tweed Fisheries Acts

Motion for Returns, The Earl of Minto *Mar* 23, 155; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Returns ordered to be laid before the House

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(*Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Esslemont*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 22 [Bill 187]

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Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1794

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- Questions, Mr. Maple, Sir John Lubbock; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 9, 702

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- Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. 1639
- Police (Houses of Parliament)—Attendance at the House, 1060

SINCLAIR, Mr. W. P., *Falkirk, &c.*
- Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief, 2R. 1027
- Education (Scotland) (New Code, 1888), Motion for an Address, 1829
- Financial Resolutions—Cart and Wheel Tax, 1324
- North Sea Fisheries—Abrogation of the Anglo-French Fisheries Convention, 1839, 1717
- Parliament—Palace of Westminster—Seats in this House, Res. 230
- Scotland—Education Department—Cookery Class—Code, 1887, 1046
  - Education Code, 1888, 266;—Article 21—Grants for Cookery, 867
- Wages (Ireland), 2R. 956, 957

SLAGG, Mr. J., *Burnley*
- British India—Annexations of Territory, 21

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- Agricultural Department of the Privy Council, 264, 1492;—Agricultural Education, 1328
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  (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *April* 16 (No. 64)

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Stansfeld, Right Hon. J., *Halifax*
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Stationery Office—Government Contracts—Contracts for Public Printing
Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 16, 1298

Statute Law Revision Bill [H.L.]
(*Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Read 2° * *Mar* 22 [Bill 186]
Committee *; Report; read 3° *Mar* 23
l. Royal Assent *Mar* 27 [51 *Vict.* c. 3]

Steam Engines and Boilers Bill
(*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham* (*Glamorgan*), *Mr. Pickard, Mr. Arthur Acland*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 17, 1561; after debate, Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Addison*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after further debate, Question put; A. 96, N. 147; M. 51 (D. L. 73)
Words added; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off for six months [Bill 137]

Stephens, Mr. H. C., *Middlesex, Hornsey*
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Stewart, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Spalding*
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Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) Bill
(*Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Godson, Mr. Hastings*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 23, 234 [House counted out]
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Local Government (England and Wales)—Elective County Councillors—County of London—Electoral Divisions, 1737
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Ordered, That the Reports and Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Army and Navy Estimates of last Session be referred to the Select Committee on Army Estimates (*Lord Randolph Churchill*) *April* 11

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Resolutions reported *April* 6, 694
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Res. 3; after short debate, Res. agreed to
Remaining Res. agreed to
Considered in Committee *April* 6, 611—Civil Service Estimates; Class I. — Public Works and Buildings, Votes 14 to 20, 23, 25 to 27; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments, Votes 1 to 4
Resolutions reported *April* 9, 841
Res. 1 to 3 agreed to
Res. 4; after short debate, Res. postponed
Res. 5; after short debate, Res. agreed to
Res. 6 to 13 agreed to
Res. 14 postponed
Res. 15 agreed to
Postponed Resolutions reported *April* 12, 1170
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Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 16, 1443; after short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned [Bill 131]
Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 17, 1498

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Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Colonel King-Harman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*)
c. Considered *; read 3° *April* 16 [Bill 157]
l. Read 1^{a} * (*L. Privy Seal*) *April* 17 (No. 69)

Tithe Rentcharge Bill [H.L.]
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Presented; read 1^{a} * *Mar* 23 (No. 53)

Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation Bill [H.L.]
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Presented; read 1^{a}, after short debate *Mar* 23, 161 (No. 54)

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Army Estimates — Volunteer Regimental Caps, 1740, 1741
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Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886 —*The Salvation Army*
Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 22, 35

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Exports of Flannels, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 19, 1734
Failure of Messrs. Greenway, Smith, and Greenway, Bankers, Warwick and Leamington, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 10, 865

Trade Marks, Departmental Committee on —The Report
Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 12, 1048

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TREASURY, A Lord of (*see* MAXWELL, Sir H. E.)

TREASURY—Secretary to (*see* JACKSON, Mr. W. L.)

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Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) Bill (*Mr. Lawson, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. Howell*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 27 [Bill 197]

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Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 23, 175

Vaccination Bill
(*Mr. Picton, Mr. Holden, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. James Ellis, Mr. Colman, Mr. Channing*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *April* 13 [Bill 77]

Vagrant Act Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Charles Acland, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Caine*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 10, 931
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. James Stuart*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. and Motion withdrawn; Bill withdrawn [Bill 125]

Vauxhall Park Bill
c. Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Brixton Park Bill, That they do provide that the purchase of the Park be not made until the opinion of the ratepayers of Lambeth has been taken on the desirability of such purchase" (*Mr. Kelly*) *April* 19, 1702; after short debate, Question put, and negatived

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Victoria University Bill
(*Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Francis Powell*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 27 [Bill 198]

Vincent, Mr. C. E. H., *Sheffield, Central*
Children's Dangerous Performances Act, 1879—Exhibitions in the Metropolis, 23
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Wages (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Howell*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 10, 952
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Sir James Corry*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. Buchanan*); Question put; A. 174, N. 68; M. 106 (D. L. 65)
Question put, "That 'now,' &c.;" A. 96, N. 143; M. 47 (D. L. 66)
Words added; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; Bill put off for six months [Bill 139]

Wales — Intermediate Education—Legislation
Questions, Mr. Kenyon; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 17, 1494
[See title *Crown Rents and Royalties*]

Wallace, Mr. R., *Edinburgh, E.*
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Dog Licence — Officers of Inland Revenue, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Mar* 26, 254
Duty and Drawbacks on Exported Cigars, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1315
Income Tax—Abolition of Poundage, Question, Mr. Hulse; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 19, 1713
Liverpool Stamp Office, Question, Sir George Baden-Powell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 19, 1715
Probate Duty in England and Wales, Questions, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 10, 853
Stamps on Patent Assignments, Question, Mr. P. Stanhope; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1326

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Licences — The Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, Questions, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 22, 45

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Ad Valorem Stamp Tax, Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 9, 709

Hawkers' Licences, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1311

Licences for Agricultural Carts and Waggons, Questions, Mr. Round, Mr. Childers, Mr. Picton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 6, 598

Stamp Duties, Question, Mr. Elton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 19, 1728

Tax on Male Servants—Exemption, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 19, 1719

The Wine Duty, Question, Admiral Sir Edmund Commerell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1325

The Yeomanry Cavalry, Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 10, 868

The Cart and Wheel Taxes

Questions, Mr. Gent-Davis, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 6, 596; Questions, Mr. H. S. Wright, Mr. Causton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 9, 707; Questions, Mr. Firth, Mr. Childers; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), 722; Questions, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Gurdon; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 10, 854; Question, Mr. F. Hardcastle; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1040; Question, Mr. Stephens; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), 1056; Question, Mr. Bond; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 13, 1183; Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), 1184; Question, Mr. Maclure; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), 1187; Questions, Sir John

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Ways and Means—*The Cart and Wheel Taxes*—cont.

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Exemption of Contractors, Question, Sir Albert Rollit; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 19, 1726

Licences on Carts, Questions, Colonel Gunter, Mr. Halley Stewart; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1049

The Horse Tax

Question, Mr. Chaplin; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 27, 403; Questions, Mr. Hozier, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Channing; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 6, 595; Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 9, 708; Question, Mr. Darling; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 10, 855; Questions, Mr. Caleb Wright, Mr. H. Gardner; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), 855; Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1051; Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 13, 1181; Questions, Viscount Wolmer, Mr. H. Gardner; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 16, 1318

Definition of a "Pleasure Horse," Question, Mr. Esslemont; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 27, 404

Horsedealer's Licence—Shetland, Question, Mr. Lyell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 19, 1713

Horses of Medical Practitioners, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 12, 1063

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Considered in Committee *Mar* 26, 268

Moved, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say)—Tea ... the pound ... Sixpence"

After long debate, Motion withdrawn

(2.) Resolved, That in addition to the Duties of Customs now payable on Wine, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles,

[*cont.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*cont.*
be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):—
Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	s.	d.
If in imperial pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles ...	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles a proportionate increase of duty according to capacity		

Resolution reported *Mar* 27
[See title *Customs and Inland Revenue Bill*]
Considered in Committee *April* 9, 730
Moved, (1.) " That towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):
Tea ... the pound ... Sixpence."
After long debate, Question put, and agreed to; other Resolutions agreed to
(8.) Resolved, That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs
Resolutions reported *April* 10
[See title *Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill*]
Considered in Committee *April* 18, 1668
Moved, " That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say):—
Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0

Mr. Jackson); after short debate, Committee—R.P.
Resolution again considered in Committee *April* 19

WEBSTER, Sir R. E. (Attorney General *Isle of Wight*
Architects' Registration, 2R. 1555
Copyright (Musical Compositions), Comm. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 592; *cl.* 2, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 593; *cl.* 4, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 5, Amendt. *ib.*
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National Debt (Conversion), 3R. 64
Supply—Treasury, 660, 661

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Coal and Wine Dues—Renewal, 396
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Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.), 2R. 1470

Weekly Wages Bill
(*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham* (*Glamorgan*), *Mr. Burt, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Randell, Mr. De Cobain*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 13 [Bill 208]

WEMYSS, Earl of
Law of Distress Amendment, 3R. 1

Westminster Abbey Bill
(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2° " *Mar* 22, 148
Moved, " That the Debate be now adjourned " (*Mr. Dillwyn*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *Mar* 23, 230; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 165]
Committee; Report; read 3° *Mar* 26, 365
l. Read 1ª * (*M. Salisbury*) *Mar* 27 (No. 57)
Explanation, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 27, 404

WHARTON, Mr. J. L., *York, W.R., Ripon*
Criminal Evidence, 2R. 73
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1523, 1524, 1529
Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1584, 1588

WHITBREAD, Mr. S., *Bedford*
Parliament — Orders of the Day (Supply), Res. 1205

WHITLEY, Mr. E., *Liverpool, Everton*
National Debt (Conversion) Act—Progress of the Conversion, 1197
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Whitmore, Mr. C. A., *Chelsea*
Housing of the Working Classes—Millbank Penitentiary, 23
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Williams, Mr. A. J., *Glamorgan, S.*
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 1797
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Williams, Mr. J. Powell-, *Birmingham, S.*
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Sentences by County Courts of Quarter Sessions—A Return, 1306

Williamson, Mr. S., *Kilmarnock, &c.*
Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882 (Bell Residue Bequest), Motion for an Address, 931

Wilson, Mr. H. J., *York, W.R., Holmfirth*
Ireland—Royal Irish Constabulary—Alleged Outrage by a Police Constable at Portumna, 1475, 1476

Winterbotham, Mr. A. B., *Gloucester, Cirencester*
Steam Engines and Boilers, 2R. 1577, 1579

Wolmer, Viscount, *Hants, Petersfield*
Financial Resolutions—Horse Tax, 1318
Ways and Means, Comm. 802

Women's Suffrage Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Denman*)
l. Presented ; read 1^{a} * *Mar* 23 (No. 52)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}" *April* 13, 1175
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this day six months") (*The Lord President*); on Question, That the word, &c.? Resolved in the negative; Bill to be read 2^{a} this day six months

Woodall, Mr. W., *Hanley*
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Works—First Commissioner (*see* Plunket, Right Hon. D. R.)

Wortley, Mr. C. B. Stuart- (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Sheffield, Hallam*
Church and Dissent—Wesleyans at Harewood, 1719
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Ecclesiastical Commissioners—Revenues of the Church of England in the Metropolitan Area, 1710
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Sentences by County Courts of Quarter Sessions—A Return, 1307, 1724
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